THE HOTHAMS

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THE STORY OF THE HOTHAMS AND THEIR FAMILY PAPERS

1066–1771

BOOKS BY A. M. W. STIRLING

COKE OF NORFOLK AND HIS FRIENDS
ANNALS OF A YORKSHIRE HOUSE
THE LETTER BAG OF LADY ELIZABETH SPENCER STANHOPE
MACDONALD OF THE ISLES
A PAINTER OF DREAMS ETC. ETC.

JOHN HOTHAM (1540—1609)
FATHER OF THE GOVERNOR OF HULL
Portrait by Abraham Janssens

THE HOTHAMS

BEING THE CHRONICLES OF THE HOTHAMS OF SCORBOROUGH AND SOUTH DALTON FROM THEIR HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED FAMILY PAPERS BY A. M. W. STIRLING

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOLUME I

Our Life is but a Winter's Day ;
Some only Breakfast and away.
Others to dinner stay & are fullfed,
The oldest only Sups & goes to Bed.
Large is his debt who lingers out the Day ;
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay.

Epitaph on a tomb at St. Burian, Cornwall.

. . . ἱερὺν ὕπνον
κοιμῶνται, θνήσκειν μὴ λέγε τοὺς ἀγαθούς.

(Callimachus.)

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PREFACE

IN a manuscript history in the possession of Lord Hotham, it is pointed out that there are few English families of similar rank which have produced a greater number of distinguished men than has the family of Hotham. The truth of this statement can be readily established. By means of age-old charters and public records the story of this ancient house can be traced unerringly from the earliest times, showing its members always prominent in the service of their country, always enacting a leading part in her struggles and her triumphs. Through successive generations they figure as powerful prelates, statesmen, ambassadors, courtiers and warriors; or, in more peaceful days, as High Sheriffs, Magistrates and Members of Parliament; while at a later period, from the end of the seventeenth century to the present day, there has scarcely been a campaign of note in which a Hotham has not distinguished himself.[1] Moreover in regard to these latter-day representatives of the race, there can still appropriately be echoed the comment expressed by George III on those who were contemporary with his reign:—"I," remarked that monarch to his Prime Minister, William, Duke of Portland, "have known many Hothams; but I never knew one who was not a man of honour." And the Farmer King, it must be conceded, although possibly incapable of

[1] Besides those who have been Commanders of Regiments, Knights of the Bath, politicians of merit, or who have held prominent positions at Court, there have been among the members of the family during the last two centuries no fewer than six Admirals, three General officers, a Bishop, a Judge, and a Colonial Governor.

appreciating the genius which had gone to the fashioning of such a record, was, in the singular uprightness of his own uncompromising rectitude, an able critic of its result.

Nevertheless, in a narrative covering so lengthy a period, and embracing so many biographies as that presented in the following pages, it is obvious that much which is of interest must yet be omitted for lack of space, and much must be registered more briefly than its historical value warrants. In the present work it is proposed therefore to deal only with the salient points in the history of this house, to note any new light which its records throw upon public events during successive generations, and to touch upon incidents therein preserved, grave or gay, great or small, which may serve to render more vivid that existence of a bygone day which to us is shrouded in the glamour of unreality. Still more, since the story of the earlier generations has already been ably dealt with,[1] it is intended here to treat principally of that portion of the family annals which, dating from the seventeenth century, may prove more arresting to the general reader ; and though even in pursuing this plan it is obvious that, at times, we must encroach upon the domain of history already written, when this is the case it will be found that either new material is presented to the reader, or that events are related from the outlook of the chief actor in the drama, whose personal records have not previously been published.

Finally it will be recognised that although the very multiplicity of men of note in this family must militate against any adequate recital of their lives as individuals, it constitutes the interest of their chronicle as a race, while it enhances the value of the muniments which they have left behind them. For as we glance at the faded documents which recall so many gallant careers and stirring deeds, a veritable panorama

[1] *History and Chartulary of the Hothams of Scorborough*, 1100–1700, by Philip Saltmarshe, Colonel. Privately printed 1915.

of history is unfolded before us. The existence of such men is interwoven with the life of the nation ; the story of their family is the story of England itself ; and the tale of their successes on land or sea is the tale of England's greatness.

The peculiar interest of such a narrative at a time like the present requires no emphasis. To review, instinct with all the freshness of novelty, the mighty naval and military battles of a bygone age ; to watch our country once again in the throes of many a struggle and many a peril from which she has long since issued triumphantly ; to trace—always from the vivid outlook of a contemporary—the emotions and the actions of some human unit during each crisis of the past—this is a study which enables us of to-day to see the situation of the moment in its true perspective, and to probe the dawning future with a buoyant courage and a dauntless faith.

The author wishes to express very sincere thanks to all who have given any assistance to her in compiling the following family history ; but especially to Lord Hotham and to Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Hotham, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., who have allowed her free access to all the private documents, records, and correspondence in their possession ; and have also supplied her with valuable information.

Through their kindness she has further been enabled to refer to the following works :—

History and Chartulary of the Hothams of Scorborough, 1100–1700, by Philip Saltmarshe, Colonel. Privately printed 1915.

Various manuscripts and memoranda by Admiral Sir William Hotham, G.C.B., second son of General George Hotham ; born 1772, died 1848.

A manuscript history of the Hotham family, by Arthur Collins, author of *The Baronetage of England*.

A manuscript history of the Hotham family by the Revd. the Honble. Frederick Hotham, Prebendary of Rochester, second son of Beaumont, second Lord Hotham; born 1774, died 1854.

When not otherwise indicated, the reader will understand that it is to this last manuscript history that any reference relates in the following pages; but it must be remarked that more than one copy of the manuscript specified is in existence, and the volume in the possession of Lord Hotham differs slightly from the volume in the possession of Mr. Charles Doughty, who also kindly allowed the author to have access to his copy. A comparison of both volumes has therefore been essential, as in many instances the one supplied anecdotes or particulars which the other lacked.

The author also wishes to express her thanks to Mr. Wray Skilbeck for his permission to republish certain passages from an article by her entitled " The Devil-Diplomatists of Prussia " which appeared in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, January, 1915.

Her thanks are also due to Mr. John Amphlett of Clent for allowing her to have a reproduction of the miniature in his possession of Mrs. Mary Amphlett, the heroine of the Lyttelton ghost story; to Mrs. Jackson for lending the plumbago of Bridget Gee; and to Miss Brown-Westhead of Lea Castle for her kind help with the proofs.

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STORY OF THE HOTHAMS

FROM 1066 TO 1771

CHAPTER I

JOHN DE HOTHAM, BISHOP OF ELY, ETC.

THE pedigree of the Hotham family as produced in county histories and genealogical works dates from the time of the Conquest, when Sir John de Trehouse accompanied William the Conqueror from Normandy, and for his good services at the Battle of Hastings received, by a grant under the Great Seal, the lordship of Hotham in the county of York and the castle and manor of Colley Weston in the county of Northampton. This Sir John de Trehouse, the alleged ancestor of the Hotham family, was styled Lord of Kilkenny, and was presumed to have been a son of the King of Leinster.

Now that numberless families in England claim to prove their descent from the period of, or a date prior to, the Conquest, is a matter of common knowledge; equally certain is it that, with very few exceptions, such claims cannot be substantiated. In the majority of pedigrees the sequence of the early generations will seldom bear investigation; gaps occur which have been filled in by the imagination of the compilers, or from the suggestions of unsupported tradition; and those who do not wish to have their faith shattered in the fable of their ancient lineage will be well advised not to investigate the matter too narrowly. Not so with the Hothams. Although the above story of their ancestry may be impossible of proof, the origin of the family can with complete reliability be traced to a date as remote as that which tradition assigned to it. Searching into the records of the past, the facts which are incontrovertible are as follows.

When the Conqueror invaded England, he was accompanied by his half-brother, Robert, Count of Mortain,[1] who fought by

[1] William the Conqueror was illegitimate; nevertheless it was not till after the death of his father that his mother, Herlwine de Conteville, married

his side at Hastings, and after the battle received, besides the earldom of Cornwall, enormous tracts of land throughout the country.

This Count was followed by two powerful Norman chieftains, Nigil Fossard and Richard de Surdeval, to whom he granted the greater part of his Yorkshire possessions. Fossard, at the Domesday survey, was thus holding numerous East Riding manors under the Count de Mortain, and among others in Hode (Hotham) he held, in 1085, one manor of $5\frac{1}{2}$ carucates (about 660 acres) besides a mill.

The victorious usurpers drove from their new possessions the Saxons who had formerly dwelt there, and replaced these by their own knights or retainers. Among the followers of Fossard who apparently profited by this action was a Norman named William, who although he does not appear himself to have assumed any territorial patronymic, was the father of Durant or Durand, styled in the Pipe Rolls "*de Hodhum.*" We may therefore regard this Norman knight William, and his son, as the first recorded ancestors of the Hotham family, a race which has undoubtedly derived its name from the township of Hotham, in the Wapentake of Holderness, in East Yorkshire.

During the years which followed, Fossard was one of the barons who hastened at the call of Archbishop Thurstan to check the progress of the victorious armies of Scotland at Northallerton, and having participated in the glories of the Battle of the Standard in 1138, in 1141 he supported Stephen at the Battle of Lincoln, subsequently sharing the captivity of his monarch. Under the feudal system this overlord, Fossard, would be accompanied by his knights, so doubtless his undertenant from Hodhum was combating in his train. William, however, must have died some time before 1166, for at that date his son appears as head of his family ;[1] while in the generations which follow the Hothams emerge more prominently into the page of history. The account of certain of these early members of the race is indeed so unusual,

Harl de Conteville, and Robert, Count of Mortain, was their son. The latter conspired against William Rufus in 1088, and lost his English possessions in consequence. Fossard then became tenant in chief.

[1] In the great Military Assessment of 1166 he is reported as holding two Knights' fees under William Fossard.

and moreover appears to find its echo in the fortunes of those who came after, that, even in view of the fact that they were not representatives of the main branch, we may be forgiven for pausing to give a brief description of them.

Historians and antiquarians alike make constant mention of Sir Geoffry de Hotham of Cranswick,[1] often called Sir Gilfrid, who, a minor in the year 1260, was a man of great wealth and importance in Yorkshire from the reign of Henry III into that of Edward II. He held many official positions, which it would take too long to enumerate, and he took an active part in the rebellion of the Earl of Lancaster against the latter King, for which he afterwards received the Royal pardon. A curious episode in his life is that, for some unknown reason, he violently entered the church at Ferriby and resisted by force of arms the presentation of William de Cliff to that living ; for which conduct he was subsequently excommunicated, and did not receive absolution till he had asked for pardon on his knees before the Chapter at Beverley. Nevertheless the piety of his subsequent conduct seems to have atoned for this one act of profanity, and of all the incidents in his eventful career historians dwell principally on his having granted a house in Kingston-on-Hull to the Friars of St. Augustin in 1315. This was five years after he had been excommunicated, and may have been in expiation of his fault, or to rehabilitate himself in the favour of the Church. Tickell, the especial historian of Hull, describes this gift as follows :—

" Gilfrid de Hotham, a devout Knight, from a religious zeal for the honour of God, for the good of his own soul, and the benefit of the poor, founded a friery [*sic*] in Hull, and dedicated it to St. Augustine, for Black Monks or Hermits of that Order, in the Street or Gate, called from thence Blackfryergate.

" This was a remarkably lofty, large, and spacious edifice. The back part extended as far as the Market Place, where they had a chapel, and a cemetery, wherein to bury their

[1] Cranswick was the oldest possession in the Hotham family until 1909, when it was sold.

dead. This Friery was ornamented with curious gardens, and various delightful fountains.—Soon after it was finished[1] Sir [*sic*] Richard Hotham, son and heir of the pious founder, obliged himself and his successors to pay yearly to the King the fee-farm rents; for which the Priests were to pray for the souls of him, his dear wife Mieta (Amicia), and all their descendants. Soon after this, the Mayor and Commonalty entered into a similar agreement, on account of the messuages possessed by those Monks in High-street and Market-Gate, for which they were to receive the benefit of their pious prayers.

"There yet remain," adds Tickell, writing in 1788, "standing near the Town's Hall, on the East side of the Market-place, a square tower, with Gothic windows, six storeys high, four of which are lodging rooms but the two uppermost are used as warehouses; also a long range of buildings running north and south, now converted into a public inn, known by the name of the Tiger, and kept by Mr. Topping. In one of the rooms (used now for a dining-room) stood, some time since, upon four pillars of stone, a font composed of the same materials, neatly carved and ornamented; but, in order to make some alterations in the room, it was removed thence into the yard of the inn, and appropriated to a very different use.—It was here taken notice of by the ingenious Mr. Page, who procured it of the owner, and it is now in the possession of Thomas Williamson Esq. of Welton, and placed under a beautiful cascade in his garden. The house and tower are both built of brick."[2]

Long since has vanished the last trace of that home of the Blackfriars. Where they paced in their gracious garden, and where they chanted their orisons in the dim light of their stately chapel there sprang up in sacrilegious days a butcher's shambles, a warehouse and a tavern. And now long vanished too is that famous Tiger Inn with its inappropriate ornament of a font in the dining-room; long mingled with the dust is Mr. Topping who degraded that sacred relic of the dead friars;

[1] Sir Geoffry died between 1320–22.

[2] *The History of the Town and County of Kingston-on-Hull*, by the Rev. John Tickell, A.D. 1789, pages 19, 20. In an addendum Tickell adds: "The square Tower with whatever else remained of this ancient and once stately fabric has been lately taken down; so that now there remains not the least vestige of such an edifice."

dust likewise is the "ingenious Mr. Page" who rescued it, and dust the vandals who placed the age-old stone to crumble under "a beautiful cascade." Nevertheless the name of Blackfriars Gate still survives in Hull; and, little regarded by the busy townsfolk of to-day, constitutes the sole link with that forgotten past when the holy monks chanted their prayers for the souls of Gilfrid, Richard and Amicia de Hotham, and all their descendants.

Shortly before the bequest to the Church made by this devout knight, and probably an ensample to his piety, are to be found two other members of his family whose merits received greater recognition at the hands of men. In the reign of Edward I lived William de Hotham[1] who, though born in England, was educated in Paris at the Convent of the Jacobins, where he took his degree as Doctor of Divinity. He was afterwards a Dominican Friar, and twice Provincial of that Order in England and Scotland. Always favoured at Court and prominent in the councils of the Sovereign, twice also he was sent out to Rome as Ambassador from the King of England to the Pope Boniface VIII. Presumably in consequence of the favourable impression created by his first visit, that Pontiff quashed a subsequent election to the vacant See of Dublin, and himself appointed Hotham to that Archbishopric in 1297. The year following was the occasion of the prelate's second embassy to Rome, when he went to treat with Boniface who had undertaken the office of mediator between England and France. On this important journey he was accompanied by his two nephews, John and Peter de Hotham, the former of whom was afterwards destined to surpass in celebrity his illustrious uncle. The Archbishop-Ambassador, we are told, executed his mission "with great applause"; but this was his last service to his country, for he died at Dijon on his way homeward, when his body was conveyed in state to London and buried there in the Dominican Church of his Order. In a quaint summary of the character of this worthy ecclesiastic, we are told—(the italics are not in the original): "This prelate was inferior to none of his contemporaries in learning, and has

[1] He probably derived from a younger branch of the earlier Scorborough Hothams. See page 20.

been highly extolled as a person of great spirit, acute parts, *and admirably adapted for conciliating to himself the favours of men.*"[1]

It may not be amiss to assume that this latter characteristic was largely instrumental in determining the career of his nephew, John de Hotham, who, born in 1265, is said to have been a son of Alan de Hotham and Maud or Matilda his wife. This couple, towards the close of the reign of Henry III, were living in the little hamlet of Trehouse in the township of Hotham, and in this remote locality presumably their son first saw daylight. There, too, he probably dwelt till, with the coming of manhood, he elected to follow in the footsteps of his renowned uncle, a decision which resulted in his being ultimately pronounced to be " one of the most eminent men of the age in which he lived." For in those days the sumptuous prelate upon his episcopal throne and the humble Dominican in his barren cell were alike a power in the land. Saintliness was then a political asset of appreciable value, and the grey silence of the Church hid statesmen as acute and potentates as ambitious as any who swayed the State in acknowledged worldliness.

John de Hotham first comes into prominence when, as Vicar of Merkesbury, he, with his brother, accompanied the Archbishop on that journey to Rome which ended so fatefully for the great prelate and in such melancholy wise for the two young men to whom must have been entrusted the solemn and lengthy office of bringing back the body of their uncle to England. But from that date the future of the young Vicar seems to have been assured. Whether on his own merits or on those of the dead prelate, he attracted the favour of the King, Edward II, who appointed him clerk or chaplain to his Royal person; and, with the ready tact of a courtier, Hotham appears likewise quickly to have ingratiated himself with the King's favourite, Piers Gaveston, to whom he became later attorney or steward. In this it will be seen that he enacted an opposite rôle to that of his kinsman and contemporary, Sir Geoffry, who assisted Lancaster to take the favourite prisoner.

[1] From a MS. in the possession of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Hotham, G.C.B.

In consequence, too, he incurred the hatred of the rivals of Gaveston, who pronounced him to be one of the bad advisers of the Sovereign. Edward himself, however, at this period speaks gratefully of his clerk's abilities and trustworthiness, and where matters of delicate diplomacy required unusual astuteness Hotham was always in request.

It is impossible here to relate in detail the numberless important posts which, during the years that followed, he filled with ability and success ; it must suffice to mention that he became successively Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer, Chancellor of the English Exchequer, thrice Chancellor of England, and in 1316 was elected and consecrated to the See of Ely. Further, in 1313, we find him attending the King of England to France to treat with Philip I ; he was the Royal Plenipotentiary to Ireland on a special mission to treat with the Barons ; in 1316 he was, as his uncle had been before him, entrusted with an important embassy to the Pope ; and in 1320 he was sent as Ambassador to Scotland to treat with Robert the Bruce for peace. Nor was he absent from the field of battle, for he marched with the Archbishop of York to check a raid of the Scots, and at the defeat of the English at Myton-upon-Swale he was nearly taken prisoner. Later he was sent by the King to settle affairs in Gascony, then in a disturbed state, and to appoint a governor for the island of Oberon.

During these years he can have had but little leisure to dwell at his beautiful manor of Holborn, the "hostell" or town house of the Bishops of Ely, yet to its improvement he appears to have devoted tireless thought and unstinting expenditure. The famous palace in his day must have been a comparatively modern dwelling, lacking in many requisites both for comfort and for state ; while the occasion of its acquisition by the See was as yet a novel tale in the minds of men. From the date of the Conquest the Bishops of Ely had been entitled to establish themselves at the Temple when they required a town domicile, but in 1250 Bishop Balsham or Balsam—whose name the irreverent might deem scarcely typical of his character—was, for some unexplained reason, stoutly denied entrance there by the then Master. It is comprehensible that the arrival of the prelate and his train may

have been inconvenient, for this unbidden guest was, according to precedent, entitled to full use of the hall, chapel, chambers, kitchen, pantry, buttery and wine-cellar—though history does not relate whether the latter was with or without the contents. But in regard to all the aforesaid places he was to be permitted ingress and egress, by land or by water, whenever he came to London. And, denied the rights which his predecessors had enjoyed uninterruptedly for the space of two centuries, Balsam refused indignantly to submit to such ruling. He took his grievance to law, when, in view of the refusal with which his just demand had been met, he laid his damages at £200. The Master could not overthrow this claim, and the Bishop won his case ; but recognising that this was an unpleasant manner of procuring lodgings in London, a subsequent bishop, John de Kirkeby, in 1290 left to his successors in the See a messuage and nine cottages in Holborn, whither they might repair in future without let or hindrance.

Save that Bishop Arundel in the fourteenth century enclosed the building, by what process the said cottages were transformed into the fine dwelling Ely Place or Palace, with its manifold offices, its extensive grounds, and its beautiful chapel, there is no exact record. The latter edifice is known to have been erected by a predecessor of John de Hotham and, strange to relate, shorn of its ancient glory, it is to-day the sole surviving relic of all the spacious architecture with which it was once surrounded. It was dedicated to a Saxon lady whose name it still bears, St. Etheldreda, likewise builder and patron saint of Ely Cathedral, and who, born in 630, was a daughter of Anna, King of the West Angles. So holy was she that although wedded respectively to two husbands, she fled from the affection of both, and, becoming an abbess, led a life of austerity which many tried to emulate. Bede tells us she never wore linen, but only woollen garments ; she ate only once a day, except on high festivals ; when her health permitted she never retired to bed after matins at midnight, continuing her prayers in the church till daybreak ; and she finally died of an infectious disorder which she had foretold would close her pious existence.[1] A lady of such uncommon sanctity

[1] It was perhaps the irony of fate that this lady of austere saintliness should come to be associated with a word the very antithesis of her own

must have been deemed by John de Hotham a patron saint deserving of special veneration ; but although he did homage to her memory by many munificent gifts to her chapel, it was rather by the perfecting of the episcopal residence that his name was remembered.

" By him," relates Knight, " the whole appears first to have been brought into a state of completeness " ;[1] yet it is difficult to conjure up an accurate idea of the hostel in his day or to trace the precise changes which he wrought there. The fine old gate-house opening towards Holborn, or Oldbourne, was built at a later date ; but ere then, before a doorway wide and massive, the armed retainers of the bishop in residence kept ward by night and day. Beyond this entrance, and apparently across a courtyard, lay the great banqueting hall which, in the passing of ages, was to witness so many strange and brilliant scenes. Built of stone, with a finely timbered roof and tiled floor, it was seventy-two feet in length and thirty feet in height. It was lighted by six Gothic windows ; and at one end was a raised dais, at the other an oaken screen. Leading from the hall on the north-west were the quiet cloisters, enclosing a quadrangle of unusual size, in the midst of which was a garden designed to gladden the eyes of the placid monks as they paced to and fro in the eternal shadow of the arches. Above the cloisters were long galleries containing apartments indented with deep-set windows, from which, through many generations, rich leaded panes cast a vivid stain upon the grey stonework below. Adjacent, half shrouded in embowering trees, stood the chapel of St. Etheldreda, whence strains of sacred music flooded the precincts, and where, before the high altar, John de Hotham, when visiting the palace, officiated with pontifical splendour. All without the peaceful building lay fair country, the smiling valley of Holborn and the hill uprising from it, which afforded a wide prospect of rural scenery and undulating land stretching away to the walls of the great City of London in the distance.

personality. Often called by the more homely name of St. Audry, at the fair of St. Audry at Ely in olden times certain cheap necklaces used to be sold, which, under the name of *tawdry laces*, were long very popular. In process of time the epithet *tawdry* came to be applied to any piece of glittering tinsel or shabby magnificence.

[1] Knight's *London*, Vol. III, page 377.

Here, indeed, it is easier to ascertain the nature of the benefit conferred by John de Hotham on his pleasant dwelling. In 1327 we learn he "purchased of Henry de Grey, heir of John de Grey, Lord of Ruthyn, a house and several parcells of land contiguous to his Manor of Holborn in the Suburbs of London, consisting of a vineyard, kitchen-garden, orchard and enclosed pasture which, together with other lands situate within the parish of St. Sepulchre's in London, that he had purchased of John de Pelham, he settled on the Church of Ely, dividing them between his successors and the Convent."[1] In that princely gift to the See from thenceforward, besides shady walks and velvet parterres, doubtless tended by the skilled hands of the monks, besides wondrous red roses,[2] banks of sweet-smelling herbs, and the pleasant plash of ingenious fountains, there flourished delights of a more practical nature; for the garden of Ely Palace became noted for its fruit and particularly for its strawberries, which history and Shakespeare alike have immortalised.[3]

Often, one fancies, by reason of the love which he showed for his "hostell," the thoughts of the Bishop, when far away, must have turned with longing to that peaceful abode from

[1] From a MS. in the possession of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Hotham, G.C.B. In a map of London by Ralph Agas in the reign of Elizabeth we see the vineyard, meadow, kitchen-garden and orchard of Ely Place, extending northward from Holborn to the present Hatton Wall and Vine Street, and east and west from Saffron Hill to the present Leather Lane. In the names of Saffron Hill, Field Lane, Turnmill and Vine Street we are reminded of a rural past; while we find a fragment of the old episcopal residence preserved in, and giving its name to, Mitre Court which leads from Ely Place to Hatton Garden. Here, worked into the walls of a tavern long known as "The Mitre," Timbs points out, "is a Bishop's mitre sculptured in stone which probably once adorned Ely Place or the precinct gateway." It is fixed to a triangular stone on which is the date 1546.

Upon the garden later were built Hatton Garden (so called after the Lord Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton, the occupant of Ely Place in the reign of Queen Elizabeth), Great and Little Kirby Streets (called after Bishop John de Kirkeby), Charles Street, Cross Street and Hatton Wall. The present Ely Place was not built till 1773.

On the other lands purchased by John de Hotham in the parish of St. Sepulchre's, Gracechurch Street is now standing.

[2] When in 1576 Queen Elizabeth forced Richard Cox, the then Bishop of Ely, to give up the Gate-house of the palace to her handsome and favoured Lord Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton, the latter also obtained fourteen acres of ground, with gardens and orchards, at a nominal rent for twenty-one years. The only modification which the indignant Bishop could obtain was that he and his successors should have free access to the garden and the right to gather there twenty bushels of roses yearly.

[3] See *Richard III*, Act III, Scene 4.

which he was debarred by very reason of his greatness ; yet ambition or the stress of circumstance prevailed, and dictated a fate unlike that tranquil lot which lured him in vain. His anxious and eventful life, indeed, remained in striking contrast to that which beckoned to him from the quiet groves of Holborn ; and in this, as in what followed during his later years, it is impossible to probe the true motive of his conduct, and with justice to applaud or to condemn.

As will be remembered, the two Despensers, father and son, succeeded to the ascendancy which Gaveston had exercised over the King. They became the principal Ministers of State, and they ventured to curtail the revenues of the proud and vindictive Queen, beautiful Isabella of France. A fierce struggle for supremacy ensued between her and these new favourites, which resulted to the disadvantage of the Queen, who found her French servants dismissed and her pension diminished. Finally, she was deprived of her last possession in England, the earldom of Cornwall ; whereupon her brother, Charles le Bel, King of France, indignant at his sister's wrongs, seized all the provinces held by King Edward of the French crown. As a result Isabella was sent to France to act as an intermediary between her husband and her brother ; and more than six months after, her son Prince Edward was likewise dispatched thither, in order to do homage in the place of his father for the lands held under the French King.[1] The danger of thus allowing the Queen and the Prince to leave England was, however, soon apparent to the Despensers. Isabella refused to return, and exerted herself to procure men and money wherewith to aid her in a campaign against the detested favourites. Thereupon they sent emissaries to the Pope and the King of France to enforce her departure from the French Court ; when her brother Charles, perceiving that she had not only deserted her husband but was carrying on an intrigue with Roger Mortimer who had accompanied her from England, became alarmed, and refused any longer to champion her cause. At length, having received a threat of excommunication from the Pope if he continued to encourage her absence from her husband, Charles ordered her to quit his kingdom immediately, " else he would make her leave it with

[1] See Froissart (edition 1808), Vol. I, pages 16–17, footnote.

shame";[1] and Isabella forthwith fled to the friendly Court of Hainault, where she was entertained for eight days. The good Earl William of Hainault and his Countess Joan had then four daughters—they afterwards had five—Margaret, Philippa, Joan and Isabella. All are reported to have been attractive in form and face ; but the handsome young Prince of Wales, only fourteen years of age, showed a decided preference for the Princess who was the same age as himself. Froissart relates that he " paid more court and attention to Philippa than to any of the others ; the young lady also conversed more frequently with him, and sought his company oftener than any of her sisters."

Some historians state that Isabella thus early contracted her son to Philippa ; but be that as it may, under the support of the Court of Hainault she now openly threw off her allegiance to her husband. Besides the foreign troops she had secured, she enlisted all the disaffected exiles of the Lancastrian faction ; and shortly, supported by her lover Mortimer as leader of her English partisans, and Sir John of Hainault who was sworn to her service, she prepared to invade England. Accompanied by her son and suite, with a large following of soldiers, she sailed for that country, and after a storm-tossed voyage she landed on the coast of Suffolk the 22nd of September, 1326.

Whether Hotham, too, had waxed weary of the dominion of the Despensers and the obvious incapacity of the King, or whether he was actuated solely by a belief that the cause of Edward had become hopeless, is impossible to say. But despite the favours which he had enjoyed at the hands of his Royal master, and, perhaps stranger still, despite the strong disapproval of Isabella's conduct which had been expressed by the Pope, he now swore fealty to her and her son, and hastened to join her banner. Although in his sixty-second year he helped to gather together an army for the Queen, and marched with her to Bristol. The King and the younger Hugh Despenser had shut themselves up in the castle there, but old Sir Hugh Despenser and the Earl of Arundel remained in the town, which the victorious forces of the Queen proceeded to capture. Sir Hugh Despenser was surrendered by the citizens

[1] Froissart, Vol. I, page 18.

to the triumphant Queen who savagely condemned him to die a traitor's death, and although he was ninety years of age, he was taken straight from her presence, dragged upon a hurdle to the place of execution, and hanged in his armour in full view of his son and the King then besieged in the castle. Their fate was not long delayed. Terrified by the sight thus witnessed they strove to escape secretly, but were captured and brought prisoners to the Queen. The King under a strong guard was forthwith sent to Berkeley Castle, and Hugh was given into the custody of Sir Thomas Wager, marshal of the Queen's army, to be dragged a captive in her train.

Every indignity and torment which could be devised for the unhappy prisoner was then put into practice. Clothed with a magnificence which mocked his wretched state, he was bound to the sorriest and smallest horse which could be procured, and in every town through which the triumphant Queen passed, he was preceded by trumpets and cymbals, to add greater derision to his plight. Knowing his doom was sealed, in a vain endeavour to attain the death for which he longed, he refused to eat food, and at last he became so weak that Isabella feared he would die ere she could reach London, and that thus she would be balked of her revenge. She therefore decided that his trial should take place at Hereford, where she arrived in time to celebrate the festival of All Saints' Day. After a sumptuous feast, at which all her suite were present, she caused her victim to be brought before her, when the barons and knights pronounced his sentence. He was first dragged on a hurdle, preceded by clarions and trumpets, through all the streets of Hereford, then he was taken to the market place where he was crowned with laurels and bound upon a scaffold fifty feet high, in order that all the people could see him ; after which he was executed with circumstances of the greatest cruelty.

Whether the Bishop of Ely, despite his sacred character, thought fit to be present at such a scene there is nothing to show. *Autre temps, autres mœurs.* But since he was marching with the Queen he must have been in Hereford when it took place, and little can he have dreamed that two generations later the granddaughter of his brother Peter would marry the

grandson of the ill-fated man then expiring in acute torment.[1] Nevertheless, although the evil nature of Isabella now became apparent, Hotham remained faithful to her cause. She continued to assert that she had been driven to her present line of action by plots against her life—that she was the most oppressed of Queens, the most injured of wives ; and it appears probable that the Bishop was captivated, as were others, by her beauty, her eloquence, and her plaints. On October 26th a special Council was held, which he attended, at which was decreed the deposition of Edward II and the appointment of the Prince of Wales as Regent. The regency was but a prelude to sovereignty, and on January 25th of the following year Hotham was present at the coronation of the new monarch, Edward III. Meantime, as a reward, the Queen had bestowed upon the Bishop certain manors which had belonged to the Earl of Arundel, who had shared the fate of the Despensers ; and three days after the coronation, the Great Seal was, for the third time, given to him in further recognition of his services. He received it in the presence of Queen Isabella, Mortimer, and a glittering concourse of their followers, and immediately gave orders that two fleurs-de-lys should be engraved on it to suggest the pretensions of Edward III to the crown of France.

That year was destined to be further memorable in the annals of England. On September 22nd a report spread through the land that Edward, the deposed King, had been brutally murdered in Berkeley Castle. The tradition which has survived there till this day is that the unhappy captive was first lowered into a narrow circular dungeon, forty feet deep, where, in the foul darkness, poisoned meat was thrown down to him. He, however, abstained from touching this, and his tormentors fearing he would not die sufficiently quickly for their purpose, hauled him up again, and placed him, presumably weak with starvation, in an isolated chamber hard by, in which he was eventually dispatched. The room where this grim tragedy took place is still preserved in the condition in which the victim inhabited it, the wider bed for

[1] Sir John de Hotham of Bonby, son of Peter de Hotham, had a daughter Alice or Alicia, who became the wife of Hugh le Despenser, second son of the second son of Hugh le Despenser, the younger, executed as above in 1326.

the King with its faded coverlet and hangings, and the smaller bed adjacent for his attendant, occupying nearly all the available space in the gloomy precincts of that sinister apartment. The pitiful corpse cast out thence was not even allowed the privilege of decent burial till the bold Bishop of Gloucester bore it away, some days later, to his cathedral with chant and orison, and there laid it in a tomb over which was subsequently raised a fine effigy of the luckless monarch. Placid and saintly in appearance, the marble semblance of Edward lies extended above his mortal remains, the sculptured face of rare beauty, and the holy calm which pervades it, conveying no hint of his stormy career and of the dire horror by which he attained to that eternal repose.

The Queen, whose relentless cruelty had hounded her husband to his death, endeavoured to shield herself from popular indignation by a fiction deliberately promulgated that he had been sent to end his days in retirement abroad.[1] But although his death and burial were generally accepted as facts by the public, this did not deter the son of the murdered man from proceeding with the preliminaries for his own marriage; indeed, it is said that the Queen Mother hastened these in order to distract inconvenient attention from the fate of her husband. As the consent of the Council and Parliament were necessary to the Royal union, if any contract had been entered into by the Prince when a fugitive it was now ignored, and all due formalities were observed. The Bishop of Hereford was deputed by the Council to select a wife for the young monarch from among the five Princesses at the friendly Court of Hainault, and when he demanded of that assembly, at which Hotham was probably present, which of the said ladies they thought preferable to be Queen of England, their spokesman replied with discretion, "We will have her with the finest form, I ween." The deputy bishop, left such liberty of choice, on arriving at Hainault made a show of surveying all the Princesses very seriously, after which he tactfully—or

[1] When the Earl of Kent exhibited great remorse and unhappiness after the death of his brother, Isabella, being informed of this, caused it to be insinuated to him that the late Sovereign his brother was not dead, merely a prisoner; but on the Earl endeavouring to ascertain the truth of this suggestion, she caused him to be arrested and promptly executed for treason.

obediently—decided upon Philippa on the grounds that she was "full feminine." The bride-elect was thereupon married by proxy at Valenciennes to the King of England, and forthwith embarked for her husband's country.

When, however, towards the close of December, Philippa and her suite landed at Dover, the Royal bridegroom of fifteen was far away in the north leading his army against the Scots who, under Robert the Bruce, had again invaded England. Thus to the most prominent subjects in the realm was deputed the duty of welcoming their young Queen, and John de Hotham, at the King's command, journeyed to Dover for this purpose. Thence he conducted the bride with due pomp to his palace at Holborn, where they arrived on or about Christmas Eve.[1] Winter, alas, lay over the gardens—that very year enhanced by the Bishop's purchase of fresh acres—and little can the girl-Queen, in this her first impression of England, have realised the summer glory of her surroundings when the crimson of the roses vied with the ruddy glow of luscious fruit. Nevertheless, while great merry-makings took place in the neighbouring City of London, and manifold festivities were given in her honour throughout the length and breadth of the land, these must have been surpassed by the untold splendour—the solemn mass, the princely banquet in the great hall, the high revels tempered to suit an episcopal dwelling—with which Christmas that year must have been celebrated in the noble manor of Holborn.

A few days later Philippa, escorted by the Bishop of Ely and a great following of nobles, set out on a wintry progress to join the King. Over the frost-bound roads and through the wind-swept counties of England they journeyed for nigh upon three weeks, till at last, about January 20th, she met her Royal bridegroom at York. Four days after that meeting, and just a year within a day from the date of the King's coronation, the marriage between Edward and Philippa was celebrated with great magnificence in the minster. Hotham, out of all the prelates in England, was chosen to assist the Archbishop of York to perform the ceremony and to chant High Mass before the Royal couple, who delighted the spec-

[1] One account states that she landed at Dover on December 23rd, another that she arrived at Holborn on that day.

tators by their youth and beauty ; while the dazzling nature of the pageant must have been heightened by a procession of the nobility of Scotland who came to conclude what was then believed to be a lasting peace between the warring countries. The murdered King in his quiet grave in Gloucester, the mangled remains of Hugh le Despenser in his tomb in Tewkesbury—all the bloody crimes which had led up to the present gladness were wholly forgotten, and two proud nations gave themselves up to unalloyed rejoicing.

Possibly as the mellow voices of the monks and the exultant notes of the organ reverberated through the sacred arches upon that memorable occasion, profoundly stirring the hearts of all that brilliant assembly, it may have seemed to John de Hotham that this was a fitting conclusion to the glory and the vanity of his public career. But whatever his thoughts during the passing of those wonderful hours, this was to prove the last great ceremony at which the Bishop of Ely officiated. In the following March he resigned the Chancellorship, and thenceforward took little active part in affairs of State. Yet it is strange to find that he assiduously continued his attendance upon Isabella until the final disgrace of that Queen in 1330—when her favourite Mortimer was publicly executed, and she herself was sent to expiate her crimes for thirty weary years by a life-long imprisonment in her manor of Castle Rising. Yet although the young King delivered over to justice both his mother and her lover, he seems to have condoned the court which had been paid to them by the Bishop of Ely, and remained always gracious to the prelate on whom he continued to bestow signal tokens of his favour.

But the eventful existence of Hotham was drawing to a close. In 1334 the Bishop " in pity for his bodily weakness " received a formal exemption from attending either Parliament or Council ; and about this date he was " stricken with palsey." In this condition he lingered for two years, and in April, 1355, feeling death approaching, he sent to the King his cross-bow and springals[1] which were placed in the Tower. The following January 14th he expired at Somersham, and his demise was formally notified to the Sovereign on March 3rd by two monks sent for that purpose from the

[1] A military engine for hurling stones, arrows, etc.

Priory at Ely. Meanwhile the body of the Bishop had been interred with great solemnity in Ely Cathedral behind the high altar of the choir, where a magnificent tomb with his effigy in alabaster, and lit by candelabra of seven branches, was duly erected to him, the mutilated remains of which may still be seen.

Thus, full of renown and honour, peacefully ended his days this great prelate who, in the innumerable rôles which he had fulfilled in the course of an eventful career, stands out a truly picturesque and conspicuous figure against the dark background of the stormy times in which he lived. For twenty-five years, during a period of perpetual vicissitudes in the State and of varying rulership, he had remained unshaken in power, in status, or in popularity ; while to the last he had retained that characteristic exhibited with equal success by his relation " of conciliating to himself the favours of men." The remarkable ability and astuteness requisite for such an achievement during such an epoch of history, requires no comment ; and to those who might consider such a feat incompatible with the holy office which he held, it may be pointed out that during all these years when he played his part respectively as courtier, diplomatist, ambassador, statesman, warrior, and king-maker, the Bishop had been a beneficent son of the Church.

Not only, as we have seen, had he beautified and enlarged that fine " hostell " of the bishops at Holborn, not only had he endowed it with fair lands and fruitful gardens, but to his munificence the See of Ely itself was greatly indebted. " Abundant vestments and rich plate " he gave to it, and many choice ornaments, among others a golden chalice having a large and precious ruby set in it, three golden pitchers, and a rich cope embroidered with precious stones. Still more, he rebuilt the steeple of the cathedral which had fallen down. " To this Bishop's taste and his knowledge of architecture," we are told, " Ely Cathedral is indebted for its elegant octagon tower supported by eight pillars covered with a dome, and crowned with a spacious lantern. The stonework was completed in six years, the woodwork raised thereon, and covered with lead in fourteen years more. . . . The Bishop generously took upon himself to complete the presbytery, which work,

containing the space of three arches lengthwise towards the dome and lantern, was wholly rebuilt and finished at the expense of £2034 12s. 8d."[1] Finally, although his will no longer exists, it is said that he bequeathed lavish gifts out of his great wealth, legacies of gold and of fair, fat acres to the Church, besides having settled on the See of Ely those " several parcels of land contiguous to his Manor of Holborn in the suburbs of London," together with " other lands situate within the parish of St. Sepulchre " and elsewhere " afterwards called Le Cellerer's rents." These latter were bequeathed on the condition that out of them should be given yearly " five pounds for a pittance, i.e. one shilling to each of the monks, two shillings to the principal officers of the Convent on the anniversary of the testator, and that the residue should be applied to the augmentation of the cellarers or caterers, appointed to find provisions for the Monastery." And besides providing thus for both the bodily and the spiritual welfare of his especial flock, the Bishop bequeathed a manor and land to the monastery of Welbeck to purchase prayers for the souls of the King, of Alan and Matilda his father and mother, and of William, Archbishop of Dublin, his illustrious uncle.

Wherefore for many generations did the monks of Welbeck and of Holborn assail the ear of heaven with petitions for the repose of the soul of that great prelate who had lived and died in the odour of sanctity; while in the spacious Palace of Ely his successors cherished a thankful remembrance of his benefactions. " Ely Palace," wrote the historian Camden three centuries later, " was well beseeming Bishops to live in, for which they were beholden to John de Hotham, Bishop of Ely under Edward III "; and throughout the many changes of ownership and surroundings which the beautiful old building was doomed to witness, few of those who sheltered within its walls but must have bestowed a gracious thought or breathed a passing prayer for that dead benefactor of generous mood, John de Hotham, sometime Bishop of Ely.

[1] The value of such a sum in those days may be better realised if we reflect that a penny would then purchase goods which would now average in cost a sovereign; that wheat was but 3s. 4d. a quarter, and that a fat sheep could be purchased for 6d.

CHAPTER II

THE GOVERNOR OF HULL

THE Bishop of Ely, it must be borne in mind, belonged to a branch of the Hothams who were subsequently known as the Hothams of Bonby, Co. Lincoln. As we have seen, Hotham or Hodhum was the original home of the race and was held by military service from the earliest complete adjustment of property in England under the feudal system ; but before the year 1200 the eldest or main line established themselves at Scorborough, a hamlet six miles from Beverley, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The lordship of this manor was held by them under the Percies, then dwelling in the same county ; and John de Hotham, who was a minor in 1252, appears to have been the first of his family who, with an air of proprietorship, described himself as being " of Scorborough "[1]—likewise, it may be added, he enjoyed the distinction of being the first of no fewer than eleven heads of his family in turn resident there who, in direct succession, bore the same Christian name as himself.[2]

In a house in this locality, therefore, called after the name of the hamlet in which it stood, the Hothams dwelt for five centuries. There generation after generation they spent a large proportion of their active, strenuous lives, and, when the battlefield did not provide a harsher fate, finally closed their eyes in death. Of this vanished habitation of Scorborough, however, little is now known, and only the traces of a deep, wide moat still testify to its site. A writer on Yorkshire of

[1] While it is not known at what precise date the Hothams first became under-tenants of the Percies at Scorborough, a Coram Rege plea of the year 1222 proves that this estate has been in their family for at least 700 years.

[2] Including the Bishop of Clogher and the late Peer, there have been seventeen heads of the family named John.

olden days states that on this spot stood a fortified stronghold "in Angle times"; and a tradition exists that the former seat of the Hothams located here was three times destroyed by fire.[1] All we know is that a spacious building was actually burnt down in 1707 during the absence of its owner in Spain; but owing to this unfortunate event, of its appearance, its dimensions, even of the date of its construction, there is now no record surviving. Pictures and documents which would have revealed these facts presumably perished in the flames which cruelly devoured not only an ancient house, but so much that was irreplaceable relating to a far more ancient race.

It is fortunate, therefore, that the story of the Hothams is to be found written upon the larger page of history. Down through the centuries few public events of importance took place in which they did not figure; few crises in which they did not play some notable part. They served with valour in the French and Scottish campaigns of the first three Edwards; they fought in the oversea expeditions of Henries IV and V. They were present at Boroughbridge, Cressy, Calais and Agincourt. They took part in the Wars of the Roses, and gave their lives for the Lancastrians on Towton's bloody field. They fought under Northumberland in the Battle of the Spurs; under Surrey at Flodden. Later we find them serving with Aske in the Pilgrimage of Grace; they were influential in the struggle between Charles I and his Parliament; they assisted William of Orange to overthrow King James. And while such is their public record during the greater part of six centuries, certain peculiarities in their private history throughout and subsequent to this period are of interest to note.

During those six centuries, from the reign of Henry I to that of William and Mary, the representation of the family descended from father to son, or from father to son's son, the succession never falling to brother, nephew or cousin—a genealogical feat almost without parallel.

During the last two centuries, on the contrary, the succession has passed in an equally exceptional manner to brother, uncle or cousin of the previous owner, the head of the family being very rarely followed by his son.

[1] *Some Historic Mansions of Yorkshire*, by W. Wheater (1888), page 72.

Throughout the earlier history of the Hothams they were a short-lived race. During a space of six hundred years, only two heads of the family attained to threescore-years-and-ten ; while in no fewer than seven instances, and in spite of early marriages, the heir was a minor when he succeeded. In the space of eighty-five years, three times the representation of the family devolved on a child of less than seven years of age.

In two instances a father and his heir met with violent deaths at the same time, Sir John Hotham and his eldest son being slain at Towton in 1461, and two of his descendants, a father and his heir, perishing by the hands of the executioner on successive days on Tower Hill in 1645.

Finally, though adventurous and daring amid all the stirring times through which they lived, their record in certain matters shows curiously little variation. The heads of the family were usually of knightly rank—the instances are rare, indeed, when this honour was not conferred upon them ; but despite the active part which they played in statecraft and on the battlefield, till the coming of the eighteenth century their status altered but little from generation to generation. They inter-married with most of the influential families in the land ; they held the reins of power, as well by alliance with those in office as by reason of individual courage or worth ; yet the only reward for which they appear to have striven was the welfare of their country and the power of handing on a stainless record to those who came after.

None the less it will be readily conceded that, during the troublous days of civil war through which must be traced the history of certain members of their race, it was inevitable that men who figured so prominently in the fortunes of their country should, at times, be swayed by the relentless force of circumstances into a course of conduct little anticipated by themselves. There comes a tide in the affairs of nations which sweeps alike those who drift with it and those who fain would stem it to some issue of which they little dreamed ; which will land one man triumphantly on the dizzy heights of success, while another, no more reprehensible, is submerged in disaster as unexpected. And thus it happened to two members of this family, separated from each other by many generations, that a single-hearted devotion to their country was no longer a

matter direct and unmistakable. It presented instead considerations so contradictory and so complex that we at this date, attempting to review their actions with sincerity, cannot in justice define where patriotism ruled and where self-interest prevailed ; while to their contemporaries, the discovery that during a time of political upheaval these men had wavered in allegiance between opposing factions in the State, was rewarded in the one instance with honour, and in the other with infamy.

Now in the history at which we have been glancing it is unavoidable to note that although much therein redounds greatly to the honour of John de Hotham, Bishop of Ely, there nevertheless exists a problem difficult of elucidation in the abrupt transference of his allegiance from his former master, Edward II, to the rebellious wife and son of that hapless monarch. Whether, as we have already suggested, the Bishop was indeed bewitched by the cunning speech and evil beauty of Isabella of France ; whether he in truth believed that the sovereignty of so weak a monarch as Edward would work the undoing of England ; or whether his conduct was dictated solely by a desire to find himself on the strongest side in the ensuing struggle, none may say. His subsequent loyalty to Isabella, in defiance of the ruling of the Pope or of the opinion of men, and even when the tide of her fortunes had turned, would seem to infer some other motive than self-interest having dictated his conduct. Be that as it may, in the dilemma with which he was thus confronted we find a curious foreshadowing of the situation in which was placed another member of his family, severed from him by a couple of centuries, but whose fate in all else presents a singular contrast to his own.

In 1540 there came into existence a John Hotham who was distinguished in the annals of his family for four things. First, he was the son of Sir Francis Hotham who afforded the solitary instance for ten generations of a head of the family who did not bear the name of John ; secondly, he was one of the three members of his family who inherited his estate before he was seven years old ; thirdly, he was the first head of his race for three hundred years on whom was not conferred the

honour of knighthood; finally he attained to what in the records of that race was the unusually advanced age of sixty-nine.

By this date, it may be remarked, knighthood had long ceased to be an obligation of military service; it had become, as now, a personal honour granted for some service to the country or to the Sovereign. A subject of Queen Elizabeth, John Hotham of the sixteenth century was not called upon to take his part in any battle on behalf of his country, for the reign of this Queen, compared with that of many of her predecessors, was a time of peace. Thus, no doubt, it happens that his portrait, with its fine, intellectual face, represents him clad in civilian attire, and bears the appearance of a scholar rather than a soldier. And thus, too, it probably befell that his sheltered life was prolonged to an age so rarely attained by his forefathers.

Nevertheless John Hotham of Elizabethan days was a man of considerable local importance and influence—Justice of the Peace, Member of Parliament, and High Sheriff of the County. He married three times, in which he set an example followed and surpassed by his successors; and by his third wife, Jane Legard, daughter and co-heiress of Richard Legard of Rysome in Holderness, he had an heir born in 1589.

Well would it have been for this son if he had inherited the peaceable character of his father, but his nature was cast in other mould, and his days were fated to be spent in a fashion befitting his temperament. His boyhood must have been fired by tales of the prowess of his forbears, of their valour on the battlefield, their influence in the State; and he must have learnt, too, of the dire peril through which England had but recently passed—of the coming of that proud Armada from Spain the year before his birth, and of how the valiant sons of Britain might have been called to shed their blood for their country had not God Himself intervened, sending a mighty storm whereby the foe was overthrown. Yet, thus early discovering that the fighting spirit which he had inherited from generations of warriors would not be gainsaid, young Hotham lamented that there were no wars in England whereon he could expend it; therefore, when little more than a lad, he besought his father to allow him to seek active

service on the Continent. Then it is said that the sober man of peace, gifted perhaps with the perspicuity of the student, strove to dissuade the hot-blooded youth from his cherished purpose. "Son," quoth he ominously, "*when the Crown of England lies at stake, you will have fighting enough.*" And often amid the scenes of a chequered career those words of the peaceful Elizabethan squire must have recurred with all the significance of prophecy to that ill-fated man to whom they had been addressed, till finally, as we shall see, they were present in his thoughts at the grim moment of death.

Some years, however, were to pass before he satisfied his martial ardour, one reason possibly being that ere he was eighteen years of age he had married his first wife Catherine Rodes.[1] By 1609, when he was still within a month of completing his twentieth year, the death of his father placed him in possession of the family estates; and the year following there was born to him a son and heir, whom in accordance with the family custom he named John. By 1614 he had not only become a widower but had re-married; and it may here be observed that he subsequently rivalled Henry VIII in the number of his alliances. That King had six wives in the space of forty-one years, Hotham had five in twenty-eight years. Moreover his heir John, better known to history as the ill-fated Captain Hotham, wedded three wives in the short space of thirteen years; and in view of the fact that the careers of both father and son were brought to an untimely ending, one is left to speculate what greater matrimonial record might have been theirs had they fulfilled the span usually allotted to mortal existence.

In 1617 Hotham appears to have received the first token of Royal favour. James I visited York, and on that memorable occasion, after dining with the Mayor, the King knighted several Yorkshire gentlemen, among whom was the Squire of Scorborough. Two years later, the latter finding himself for the second time a widower, learnt that James was permitting Colonel Vere to take a regiment of volunteers to the assistance of his son-in-law, Frederick the Elector Palatine. The moment

[1] Daughter of Sir John Rodes, of Barlborough, Co. Derby, the eldest son of Francis Rodes, Esq., of Great Houghton, Co. York, one of the Justices of Common Pleas, temp. Eliz., by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Brian Sandford.

was opportune for Hotham to put into execution his long-deferred plan of seeing active service ; and he decided to join that regiment. Thus it came about that he was present at the Battle of Prague, where Frederick was defeated and driven out of Bohemia ; and during the greater part of two years he remained in Germany in the service of the Elector and under the command of Count Mansfield.

When at length, in the winter of 1620, he returned to England, it may well have seemed to him that the most stirring period of his life was closed. He had apparently acquitted himself with credit while abroad, and could afford to be content with that achievement. He was now in his thirty-second year, the owner of an ample estate, and shortly after his return, on January 4th, 1621, he was created a baronet—just ten years after that order was first instituted. Although already serious dissensions had arisen between King James and his Parliament, there was as yet little in the aspect of public affairs to indicate the turbulent times which were approaching, and it must have appeared unlikely to Hotham that a life other than that of a peaceful country squire lay before him.

But four years later James I died, and Charles I, an immature youth of twenty-five, ascended the throne, inheriting, with an autocratic temperament, that legacy of discord with his people, bequeathed to him by his father. That same year Hotham was elected for Beverley[1] which he continued to represent during all the five Parliaments of Charles's reign, and during the first of these may be said to have commenced the long and bitter struggle between the new King and his Commons.

It is not necessary here to follow that well-known conflict in its manifold issues, we are concerned solely with the part played by Sir John Hotham in regard to it. An empty treasury, an expensive war, and the consequent necessity for further supplies to be wrung out of an already over-taxed people were among the chief factors in the severance between Charles and his subjects ; but that he grievously broke faith with his

[1] He was returned as Member both for the Borough of Appleby in Westmorland and also for Beverley, but decided to sit for the latter which was close to his own home, and where his influence was great.

people and his Parliament, that he was despotic and injudicious in every crisis in which he might have conciliated them, that it was imperative for the welfare of the nation that the power of the Crown should be curtailed—must early have become apparent to Hotham. In view of the burdens under which the people groaned and the infringement of civil and religious liberty with which they were threatened, a body of patriots had arisen, all animated by the determination to reduce the Royal prerogative within a reasonable compass. Alike in his own county and in Parliament Hotham found himself among men pledged to this great aim ; he quickly drifted into their society and friendship ; and he was soon recognised as having thrown in his lot with the more advanced spirits of his age, among others the indomitable Sir Edward Coke, the heroic John Hampden and John Pym, and his fellow-Yorkshireman Sir Thomas Wentworth[1] who was as yet ranged on the popular side.

At this date, indeed, the attitude of Hotham appears to have been that of many of his contemporaries. Alike by birth and by tradition he was attached to the Royal cause and desirous to be loyal, yet he could entertain no delusions respecting the errors of the Sovereign or the justice of the demands of the people. And the man who can thus sympathise with opposing ideals is at once crippled in strength. The strong man—the man who carries all before him and sways the destiny of nations—is the man of unbending views and profound convictions—usually, for that very reason, of narrow judgment. Faith in a cause can remove mountains ; but a capacity for appreciating both sides of a question paralyses action and invites disaster.

So it was with Hotham ; but while his conduct in what follows must remain one of the enigmas of history which each student of the past may interpret according to whim, it does not appear difficult to arrive at a just estimate of his character. Many of his contemporaries have left us an unpleasing portrait of him ; but the pens of his traducers, especially in the case of Clarendon, are too obviously dipped in gall to lend much value to their criticism. On the other hand, the letters of

[1] Thomas Wentworth, created Earl of Strafford 1628. Born 1593. Executed on Tower Hill, 1641.

the famous Pym and Hampden, while he championed the cause which they had at heart, display for him an equally emphatic friendship, and are full of an admiration, undoubtedly sincere, for his ability, bravery and worth.

Under these circumstances it is safer to steer a course between the two, and perhaps the verdict which can most be relied on is that given by two other Yorkshire landowners, Sir Thomas Wentworth and Sir Hugh Cholmley. With the latter Hotham had many sharp dissensions, and Cholmley had therefore little cause to speak of his sometime colleague with leniency, yet he has not only left a dispassionate estimate of Sir John's character, but in that graphic portrait he furnishes us with an epitome of Hotham's outlook upon the political situation, and so provides the keynote to his conduct :—

Sir John (he states) was a man of good understanding and ingenuity yet of a rash and hasty nature, and so much wedded to his own humour as his passion often overbalanced his judgment, and yet he was able to give good counsel and advice, where his own interest was not concerned ; he was valiant and a very good friend ; and if his own particular interest had not been concerned would not have forsaken his friend for any adverse fortune ; he was a man that loved liberty, which was an occasion to make him join at first with the Puritan party, to whom after he became nearer linked merely for his own interest and security ; for in more than concerned the civil liberty he did not approve of their ways. Some of his most intimate friends, who often moved him to quit the Parliament and come to the King, found him very inclinable, making protestation that he did but expect a treaty, when, if the King would but offer that which was reasonable and the Parliament not accept, he would desert them.[1]

[1] State Papers Collected by Edward, Earl of Clarendon, Vol. II, page 185. It is interesting to compare this criticism with that presented by Clarendon personally (the italics are not in the original). "Hotham was by his education a rough and rude man, of great covetousness, great pride, and great ambition, without any bowels of compassion or the least sense of generosity. *His parts were not quick and sharp, but composed and he judged well. He was a man of craft and more likely to deceive than to be cozen'd*" (Clarendon's *Great Rebellion*, Vol. III, page 164). It will be seen that this criticism, which depicts Hotham as being of poor intelligence, but self-possessed, of calm judgment and deliberate cunning, is in striking opposition to the verdict of Cholmley, and to the verdict of Clarendon himself (see page 42). Whitelock (quoted in Tickell's *History of Hull*, p. 478), and Markham in his *Life of Lord Fairfax*, page 110, echo Clarendon's apparently spiteful estimate of Hotham's character.

From this, coupled with the comments of other witnesses, we may gather the leading characteristics displayed by Hotham. He was, we glean, of " anxious temperament " and " difficult to manage " ;[1] by nature excitable, impulsive in action, undecided in opinion, and consequently unstable ; but withal warm-hearted and very human ; of tried bravery, of excellent understanding, a faithful friend and a lover of liberty. Further, we find that " haughty and imperious " in spirit,[2] unconciliatory in manner, and disposed to be irascible with his colleagues, he was evidently too quick of temper, too downright in speech, and too unguarded in conduct to be a " man of craft " as he is so often erroneously represented.

His picture seems to confirm this verdict. The fashion of the day produces a fictitious likeness between men of the same period, and there is something reminiscent of Charles himself in the appearance of the man who was destined to rank amongst the foremost foes of that monarch. Yet the face of Hotham displays more marked individuality than that of his Sovereign. A hardy soldier, weather-beaten and stalwart, he looks out of the canvas to-day with the expression which he doubtless bore as he rode at the head of his Roundhead troopers. One can see him, a bluff and jovial comrade, a man dauntless in the field, reckless in action—a man at times tenacious of purpose, at others uncertain in judgment. One sees the weakness about his mouth, the lack of decision in his eyes, which are in striking contrast to the determined jaw and directness of glance exhibited in the portrait of his son and would seem to support the opinion of those historians who have held that the latter was in truth the dominant spirit in the events which followed.

Wentworth, indeed, furnishes another sidelight on the character of the elder Hotham which is of considerable interest. In 1628 Charles, as a bid for popularity, determined upon selecting one or two of his Ministers from the party who had represented the rights of the people. He therefore appointed Wentworth Lord President of the North, thus turning an opponent into a warm supporter ; and one of the first acts of

[1] Letter from Sir Thomas Wentworth to Secretary Windebank on February 13th, 1638.

[2] Rushworth *Collections*.

the new President was to appoint Sir John Hotham Governor of Hull, that town with which his forbear Sir Geoffry de Hotham had been so closely associated. In 1635 Sir John further succeeded Wentworth as High Sheriff of Yorkshire, an office which, it will be remembered, his father had held before him; and throughout this period Hotham seems to have raised no objection to the collection of the unpopular taxes imposed by the King, while his policy appears to have been that of quiescence towards both factions in the State. Yet Wentworth, always the warm partisan of Hotham, seems to have recognised that the attachment of his friend to the Royalist party was but half-hearted. In a letter to the Secretary of State, Sir Francis Windebank, in February 1638, he admits that there was "somewhat more will and party" in Hotham than he wished; yet, added he encouragingly, "he is very honest, faithful and hearty which way soever he inclines, and is to be won and framed as you please with good usage." The suggestion is significant. Uncompromising, "hearty," lacking neither in patriotism nor in loyalty as Hotham was at this date, he was recognised to be of a temperament unduly impressionable and impetuous; and in the words "*to be framed as you please with good usage,*" we see hinted that vacillation of purpose which was to prove his undoing.

At first, however, Sir John's governorship of the seaport appears to have been comparatively uneventful till, in July, 1635, the plague suddenly made its appearance. Three times previously it had visited Hull, owing, it was believed, to the fact that the town was specially exposed to infection from the foreign shipping with which it was constantly brought in contact. On one of these former occasions, in 1596, the epidemic had not spread beyond the locality more particularly reminiscent of the ancestor of the Governor, Sir Geoffry de Hotham; Blackfriar Gate had then been so deeply infected that it had been judged necessary to wall up that portion of the town, leaving only two carefully guarded doors through which provisions and medicines could be passed to the wretched prisoners beyond. But the fourth visitation of the scourge to the unhappy seaport could not be thus confined within any prescribed area. The disorder spread with frightful rapidity

SIR JOHN HOTHAM, THE FIRST BARONET
GOVERNOR OF HULL
BEHEADED ON TOWER HILL, JANUARY 2ND, 1644 5
Portrait by Cornelis Janssen

and a general panic ensued. The markets and all public assemblies were suppressed by Royal proclamation, and the gates of the town itself were closed save for the entrance of provisions. Numbers of the inhabitants fled to the country; commerce became extinct; 2500 of the most opulent citizens were reduced to penury, and the place became a scene of desolation and horror. The neighbouring justices of the peace were ordered to impose taxes and provide food for the relief of the stricken people, and Hotham in his capacity of Governor must have had his time fully occupied in enforcing and supervising such regulations. Meantime it is to be presumed that he refrained from entering the infected area while, for three years, the pestilence continued to rage, during which 2730 persons died within the town, and the total number of victims who had fled from it only to expire later from the distemper which they carried with them is said to have doubled that number.

With the subsidence of the epidemic, at last, Hull, owing to the generosity of the neighbouring families, quickly recovered its prosperity, and events of political moment once more claimed the attention of both Governor and people. By 1639, the Scots being in rebellion, Charles announced his intention of visiting the north, and out of the army of 22,000 men which he headed, two thousand were to be equipped from the magazine at Hull. Under such circumstances it was to be expected that the chief conduct of affairs would devolve upon Hotham, who by that date had been Governor of this seaport with credit for nearly eleven years, and who was, moreover, one of the principal men in the north. Yet this was the very moment selected by Charles for putting upon so prominent a subject and valuable an adherent a gratuitous and public affront.

It is probable that the King had never ceased to regard Hotham with distrust owing to the knowledge that he had been a foremost member of those Parliaments which had persistently attacked the Royal prerogative; moreover Sir John had of late again shown a disposition to thwart certain schemes set on foot by Charles.[1] Nevertheless, at the first

[1] On January 10th, 1638, he was a signatory with seventeen other Yorkshire gentlemen to a protest against the King's proposal to utilise the train bands of the county for service elsewhere, on account of the defenceless state in which this would leave their wives and families.

suggestion of ousting Hotham from office, Wentworth, his faithful champion, earnestly combated it; and, when an aspersion was cast upon the loyalty of his friend, Wentworth still more warmly advocated his cause. "I conceive my credit with him to be such," he asserted, "and to understand him so well as to make him as forward and passionate to satisfy the King as any other."[1] Yet Charles remained obstinately determined to supersede Hotham in the governorship of the town, and Captain Legge, "Master of the Armoury," was suggested as a substitute. In vain Wentworth wrote urgently regarding this matter to Sir Francis Windebank in February, 1638:—

Sir Jacob Astley gives me a line that there were some intentions to transfer to Capt. Legge the Governorship of Hull and the leading of 200 men[2] which Sir John Hotham has there, but I am an humble suitor to His Majesty that it may be no more thought of, for besides being a slight to myself, I judge it would be much worse for the service, Sir John having as much power in these parts as any other gentleman. He is extremely sensible of honour and discourtesies, perhaps a little overmuch, and having spent two years under Colonel Mansfield in the wars of Germany, is, I believe, as able as Capt. Legge, and I am sure in other respects far above him. I desire that this gentleman may have continuance and countenance in the command he has exercised with credit for nearly eleven years.[3]

Wentworth, in short, proved no half-hearted advocate. Even while chiding Sir John for quarrels with himself and other officials, he pledged himself to oppose the pretensions of Captain Legge; and yet again he wrote begging that the King would not put such a slight upon Hotham, pointing out quaintly that "*Hotham is faithful in parts, over eager, but very earnest, and as considerable a person as any in the North of England, and it is therefore unadvisable to cast him off and discourage him by taking away the Government of the town from him.*"

Had Charles listened to this advice, the course of history

[1] Strafford's *Letters*, Vol. II, page 94.
[2] Part of the train bands for the East Riding.
[3] Strafford's *Letters*, Vol. II, page 94.

might have been changed. Hotham was not only a man of widespread influence in his own county, but one who carried weight in the councils of the land ; his activity in Parliament had seldom proved negligible, and he was a partisan whose adherence it was vital to cement. Still more he was, as amply indicated by Wentworth, a man hypersensitive to affront, yet "very earnest" when his allegiance was secured. But Charles, with his usual aptitude for wrecking his own interests, persisted in a measure the inevitable result of which was certain to alienate so powerful an ally.

The King went to Hull and also stayed at Beverley ; but the name of Hotham does not appear amongst those who welcomed him. His Majesty's sojourn at the former place, indeed, is of present interest only in view of the curious contrast which it affords to the manner of his second visit to the same town ; but this being so, we will give a cursory glance at the fashion of his first reception there.

The inhabitants were actually given only three days' notice of the Royal advent, and during that time they surpassed themselves in feverish efforts to do honour to the event. At a meeting hastily convened it was decided that the Mayor, Aldermen, and Recorder should attend at the gates to receive His Majesty ; rails should be made behind which forty people could be stationed ; but, with due concern for their dignity, the civic authorities decreed that the place for the Mayor and Aldermen should be elevated higher than the rest, and the rails before that select assembly should be hung with rich carpeting. After saluting the King at his entrance, the Mayor should on his knees deliver up to His Majesty the keys of the town "strung on a blue string," and present him with a purse of "curious workmanship" containing a hundred guineas—an act which, in the state of Charles's finances, was certain to meet with peculiar favour. Further, all the train bands were to line the streets where the King was to pass, and were carefully instructed in the exclamations of loyalty to which they were to give vent, with an air of spontaneity, on his arrival. The chief citizens were also ordered "to be ready to wait on his Majesty in their best attire, and to make as genteel an appearance as possible," and the soldiers were "immediately new cloathed" at the cost of the town and

county. Moreover, not only was the human element thus hustled into a state of preparedness, but the very ramparts and walks along the walls of the seaport were levelled and mended with the utmost rapidity. Last, but not least, to the Recorder, Mr. Thorpe, was deputed the all-important task of preparing a speech wherewith to greet His Majesty and to explain adequately the transport of delight into which his presence had plunged his loyal subjects of Hull.

And of all the busy inhabitants during the three strenuous days and nights which preceded the arrival of the King, none can have been more earnestly occupied than was Mr. Thorpe. Inditing, polishing, and doubtless rehearsing his speech, he achieved his task to admiration and evolved a piece of oratory which, for bombastic phraseology, surely surpassed any before or since delivered by civic official. When Charles reached Hull, and was received by the genteelly clad citizens, who, one imagines, must have been with difficulty stitched into their hastily manufactured garments, Mr. Thorpe, advancing with a profound reverence, opened his harangue by informing his Sovereign that—

If the approaches to the sacred throne of heaven and earth had been by the same way of access, we had long since learnt by our daily praying to the King of Kings to speak as might become us to your sacred Majesty, whom God has now blessed and honoured us with the presence of. But since these are different, and we not so much conversant with the latter as with the former, we must heartily crave your sacred pardon and grace, for any rudeness which is or may be committed: assuring your Majesty that it proceeds from nothing but want of knowledge and skill, how to receive and express ourselves upon the happy reception of so much glory.

And after further assuring the King that "our full hearts make us almost unable to undergo what we most thankfully undertake . . . *and would even make us dumb with the awful Majesty that happily we behold and adore*"—a condition which one suspects Charles might have preferred—Mr. Thorpe gave utterance to what perhaps represents the gem of his composition:—

This town was always faithful and true; and in respect of the zealous and loyal affections of the people of the same, to

your Majesty's honour and service, it may be said, as is the city of Seville in Spain, not only to be walled, but also to be garrisoned with fire ; *not dead, nor sleeping ; not unanimated, like senseless flints, but continually vivacious, waking, ardent, apparent and sensible in their courageous and boiling heat for your Majesty's long life, welfare and happiness* ; so that, as the town is not only yours by name, but also by nature, so shall it ever remain to be.[1]

One can picture the scene upon that bright April day—the pompous Recorder delivering his speech in sonorous, rounded periods, amid the admiring group of scarlet-robed aldermen ; the citizens gay in their rich velvets and hastily donned finery ; the King, with his refined and melancholy countenance, listening with complacent dignity while Mr. Thorpe told how the inhabitants of Hull desired that he might "*live for ever and ever*" ; that his existence might be prolonged "*till time shall be no more*" ; that not only should "*good success always attend all his wishes and desires,*" but that (surely a somewhat dubious metaphor ?) "*all the thorns in his travels should grow up into crowns.*" In all the portraits by brush or pen which have been left to us of Charles, none have ever indicated that a gift of humour brightened his tragic career. Yet in the future he must have recalled that scene of his first visit to Hull with sardonic amusement, for not only, as we shall see, was he to test and find wanting the extravagant loyalty of that same city, but even the man who acted as its mouthpiece with such fulsome adulation was, in the future, to prove one of the most bitter foes to the Royal cause. In contemplation whereof Tickell, the historian of Hull, makes sententious comment—"*Orations of this kind indeed ought only to be regarded as vain ceremonies, on which no dependence can be prudently placed.*"

Nevertheless Charles seems to have been gratified by his reception. When the Mayor, in his turn, echoing the sentiments of the Recorder, presented the King with "a rich and elegant ribbon, several yards long," emblematic of the bond which bound the citizens to obedience and loyalty, the King

[1] Tickell's *History of Kingston-on-Hull*, page 319, footnote. Thomas Gent in his *History of Hull*, 1735, gives a somewhat different version of the Recorder's speech, but the substance is the same.

ordered this pretty symbol to be tied into a knot and placed in his hat, calling it his "Hull favour." Thereafter, having been entertained and lodged at the house of Sir John Lister, the Royal visitor carefully surveyed the town, studied the defensive works then being undertaken by Captain Legge, inspected the magazine of valuable ammunition, and remarked significantly on the fact that there was but one entrance to the city then in use, through the great gates. He, in short, satisfied himself that the seaport was an invaluable possession which it was essential should be carefully secured to the Royalist cause; and with this object in view, in the September following he appointed a Governor to his taste, Sir Thomas Glemham. Then was witnessed the first disaffection of the loyal town of Hull, for the inhabitants declared stoutly that the Mayor was now their Governor, and that to be forced to admit another was a breach of their privileges and charters. They refused to allow Sir Thomas Glemham to enter, nor would they deliver up to him the keys of their city; till Charles, incensed at their persistent opposition, uttered a threat which quickly robbed them of defiance. *He announced his Royal intention to pay them another visit;* and at the prospect of a repetition of that "happy reception of so much glory," the hearts of the citizens failed them. They succumbed ignominiously. Charters and privileges were alike forgotten; Sir Thomas was immediately accepted as their Governor and they tendered to him the keys of the town, castle, forts and magazine. A regiment of a thousand men accompanied him to form part of the garrison there; the valuable seaport with its ammunition was thus, for the present, secured to the King; and Charles, to the relief of all thankful citizens, graciously postponed his proposed visit.

Meanwhile the result of the King's impolitic treatment of Sir John Hotham was quickly apparent. In the Parliament which met in April, 1640, Sir John resentfully threw in his lot with the democratic party; he refused to pay the unpopular tax known as ship-money, and he complained bitterly of the military charges imposed by the King which, he said, cost Yorkshire £40,000. His attitude roused enthusiasm among his colleagues; but Charles within three weeks dissolved this

obstreperous Parliament and proceeded to raise funds arbitrarily for his Scottish campaign in which he was subsequently defeated, when, being forced to retreat to Yorkshire, he there billeted his soldiers on the inhabitants. Again Sir John was one of the foremost to oppose this measure. He drew up a petition complaining of such a practice in the impoverished state of the county, and Charles, furious at what he defined as a mutinous request, sent for the two men whom he designated as the ringleaders, Sir John Hotham and Sir Hugh Cholmley, Vice-President of the North, and angrily reprimanded them. Sir Hugh gives the following account of their interview :—

Being in London and about to depart the next morning, Sir John Hotham and myself, being ready to put foot into stirrup, His Majesty sent one Stockdale, a Messenger, to bring us to him ; and when we came, he reprehended us in very sharp words, telling us "We had been the chief cause and promoters of all the Petitions from that Country" (which indeed was the truth) and in plain terms said that "if we ever meddled, or had any hand in any more, he would hang Us." To which I answered, "Sir, we are then in a very sad condition, for then the Lord President and those you set Governors over us may injure and oppress us without any hopes of redress."—To which the King answered, "Whenever you have any cause of Complaint, come to me, and I will hear it."[1]

To scold, like naughty children, two influential subjects who had but promoted a reasonable petition ; to threaten them with the indignity of the gallows ; and, in response to justifiable representations on their part, to offer them a hearing which they knew well would be barren of result, was on a par with the fatal policy invariably pursued by Charles. But besides thus further alienating men who might have served him well, he shortly afterwards committed a crowning act of folly. In 1641 he allowed himself to be forced into consenting to the execution of his ablest Minister and most loyal supporter, Strafford ;[2] while that same year, probably compelled

[1] From the MS. of Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby.

[2] The King's own excuse for this action was as follows : "If my own person only were in danger," he told the Council, "I would gladly venture it to save Lord Strafford's life ; but seeing that my wife, children, and all my kingdom are concerned in it, I am forced to give way to it." Sir John Hotham was one of the witnesses summoned by the prosecution at Strafford's trial,

by pecuniary necessity, he disbanded the Royal army. The troops quartered at Hull were discharged, the loyal Governor, Sir Thomas Glemham, resigned his office, and the army was disbanded.

On November 3rd, 1640, met that memorable assembly known to history as the Long Parliament, in which Sir John Hotham was one of two members representing Beverley, while his son, Captain Hotham, represented Scarborough. During the imprisonment of Bishop Wren by this Parliament, it befell that the greater part of the palatial buildings of the grand old hostel of the Bishops of Ely at Holborn was pulled down ; but there is nothing to show whether the two John Hothams who formed part of the conclave responsible for this act of vandalism in secret regretted the demolition of that fine relic of their great ancestor and namesake. The entire energies of themselves and their colleagues at this date were devoted to reducing the Royal authority to a pretence ; and as it became increasingly evident that the grave issues between the King and his Commons might ere long entail a resort to arms, in 1642 preparations for such an eventuality were set on foot by the representatives of both factions.

For in this critical situation it was obvious that whichever party could succeed in securing Hull, that valuable garrison of the north, would at the outset of any such contest be in a position of decided superiority. The King therefore sent the Earl of Newcastle to take possession of the town in His Majesty's name ; whereupon Parliament, on January 11th, 1642, appointed Sir John Hotham Governor of Hull, with orders not to deliver up the place without the King's authority "signified to him by the Lords' and Commons' Houses of Parliament."[1] In other words, he was not to accept the individual commands of Charles, but only those of this Government which still posed as the King's mouthpiece.

Now with regard to Hotham's acceptance of this post, Sir Hugh Cholmley states clearly :—

That if Sir John Hotham could have been assured of the King and Queen's pardon for what he had done or said in Parliament, and received into their grace and favour, he might

but his evidence conveys the impression that he was not a willing witness, and that he furnished as scanty evidence as was practicable.

[1] *Journal of the House of Commons*, January 11th, 1642.

have made a faithful and serviceable person to them ; the denying of which (or at least answering it coldly) was a great motive in his undertaking the employment at Hull.

After that Sir John had undertaken that employment for Hull, he had some occasion that detained him in London ; so that upon notice of the Lord of New-Castle being gone thither, young Hotham was sent down to shew to the townsmen his father's authority from the Parliament, and to draw forces into the town.[1]

In the dilemma in which the citizens of Hull now found themselves there was much divergence of opinion among them whether indeed to accept the Governor provided by the King, or the Governor provided by the King's Parliament ostensibly on His Majesty's behalf. For a time they temporised. They first declined to recognise the authority of Lord Newcastle without instructions from the Parliament ; yet when young Hotham appeared before the gates of the town on January 16th or 17th, and sent a trumpeter to demand admittance for himself and his forces, they equally refused to recognise his pretension. It was not till January 23rd that, on receiving imperative orders from Parliament, the Mayor and leading townsfolk agreed to the entry of the Captain, and then, it is said, a strange thing happened. As young Hotham, followed by his train bands, marched through the town, representative of the new Governor and the authority of the Parliament, there was witnessed " the greatest sight that ever had been seen or heard of."[2] Into the market place there flowed water —whence or wherefore is not related—but so effectually did this flood bar the way " that no man could pass there." To the superstitious it seemed that Heaven itself, thus arresting the progress of the incomers, was visibly protesting against their violation of the divine right of the King ; and Cholmley states that this event " was taken for a strange omen," which in its fulfilment " proved not only fatal to the Father and Son, but even to the Kingdom."[3]

[1] State Papers Collected by Edward, Earl of Clarendon, Vol. II, pages 181–2. Tickell erroneously states that both Sir John Hotham and his son at once repaired to Hull ; but till after March 5th, 1642, the former certainly remained in London, as his name appears at intervals serving on Committees in the House of Commons. He was however in Hull by March 22nd (see *Journal of the House of Commons*, March 22nd, 1642).

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. II, page 182. [3] *Ibid.*

Charles lost little time in complaining bitterly to his Parliament that a garrison and a Governor had been placed at Hull without his consent, and, more than ever alive to the importance of securing that fortress with its vast magazine which far exceeded the warlike stores in the Tower of London, he determined to journey personally to the north in an attempt to achieve his object. The Parliament had little difficulty in penetrating his design ; and as soon as it became known that the Court was about to take up residence in the loyal city of York, Sir John Hotham received instructions not to allow any foreign ships to enter Hull without strict examination into their strength, stores, etc., and to ensure that no other forces should gain a footing within the seaport save only those who were garrisoned there in the service of the Commonwealth.

So far the orders of Parliament were clear ; but with regard to a more serious contingency which might obviously arise they remained pointedly silent. It was evident that Charles himself might demand admission to the city, and in such a case it was all-important that Sir John should be ready-primed in regard to the course which he was expected to pursue. Directly it became known that the Court was going to Yorkshire, some friends of Sir John asked in the House whether the orders given to the Governor were to be interpreted as an intention that he should deny the King entrance if the latter came in person to Hull. But to this question the leaders of the House carefully evaded giving any explicit answer. To use Sir Hugh Cholmley's own words, "*the motion was shuffled off, and the House made no expression in the point ; so that if the King had entered by force, Sir John might have borne the denial upon his own shoulders.*"[1] The meanness of such conduct requires no comment, but the Members of the House still posed as servants of the Sovereign as well as of the people, and they shrank from taking the initiative in a decisive act of hostility which at once severed any mythical connection between the two.

What follows is graphically described by Tickell. The Parliament having been anxious to remove the ammunition at Hull to a place more convenient for their future use, had requested permission from the King to have it brought to the

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 182.

Tower ; this Charles had naturally refused. Later, being informed that ships were under preparation at Hull to take away the contents of the magazine in defiance of his mandate, Charles resolved to go thither himself, with the dual intention of frustrating "so interesting an object," and of gaining possession of the town. He was the more readily led to this decision in that he was "persuaded by some that Sir John Hotham, though he had accepted a commission from the Parliament yet had neither the inclination nor the ability to oppose his entrance."[1]

First, however, Charles had recourse to a clever ruse. On the 22nd of April he sent to Hull, under pretext of seeing the town, his son the Duke of York and his nephew the Elector Palatine, with a large following of attendants, and accompanied also by various "honourable persons," among whom was Sir Thomas Glemham, the former Governor. It was market day in the busy seaport, and the Princes quietly made their entrance among a stream of country-folk who were crowding in from the surrounding district. The Governor and Mayor had thus no knowledge of the arrival of the Royal visitors till the latter had appeared in public in the streets, whereupon the only course possible was to receive and entertain them with all the respect due to their rank.

The Princes, indeed, announced that they intended to stay only for one night, but they proceeded to view the town at their leisure. On that first day they were entertained by the Mayor, while on April 23rd, which happened to be St. George's Day, they were invited to dine with the Governor before leaving ; but although they spoke of their departure as imminent, Sir John, to his disquietude, had reason to suspect that this was a mere pretence ; and his worst fears were soon destined to be realised. Early on that eventful morning, Charles set out from York with two or three hundred attendants, besides many gentlemen of the county ; and when he was arrived within a short distance of Hull, he sent forward an officer with the message that *the King intended that day to dine with Sir John Hotham, and that His Majesty was at that moment within four miles of the town.*[2]

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 349, footnote.
[2] *Ibid.*, page 346.

The sudden and cruel dilemma in which Sir John was thus placed requires no emphasis. The cleverness of Charles's ruse was now apparent. On a day when the Governor of Hull was actually entertaining the King's son and nephew, what plausible excuse could he offer why he should not entertain the King himself? Still more was Hotham thrust into an unfortunate predicament, for, as we have already seen, despite the resentment which he naturally felt towards a Sovereign who had not hesitated to treat him with indignity, he was at heart loyal to the cause of Charles where that cause was commendable, and few things did he desire less than an open and acknowledged rupture with his Sovereign. Even Clarendon admits that, in the first instance, Hotham "took the government of Hull without any apprehension or imagination that it would make him an accessory to rebellion, but believed that the King and the Parliament would be reconciled, and that the eminence of his charge would promote him to honour and reward." Yet although there was at present no admitted severance between the King and the Commonwealth, in the situation in which Hotham now found himself, loyalty to one involved disloyalty to the other; and, endowed as he apparently was with a disquieting tendency to appreciate both sides of the contest, he discovered himself abruptly compelled to decide between two masters. "This I confess put me in a great strait," he said afterwards, "on the one side being most extremely sorry to give his Majesty the least cause of offence; on the other the breach of a trust being in my sense so horrid a fact, as after that I should not have wished to live."[1] Thus upon this man of "anxious temperament" was relentlessly forced a decision on which hung issues of incalculable importance to the nation at large. Clarendon further relates:—

. . . The Governor was a man of fearful nature and perplexed understanding,[2] and could better resolve upon deliberation than on a sudden; and many were of opinion that if he had been prepared dexterously beforehand, and in confidence,

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 332, footnote.

[2] It is interesting to compare this assertion with the opposite statement made by Clarendon quoted *ante* page 28, footnote, that Hotham was "composed and he judged well; he was a man of craft and more likely to be deceived than cozen'd." The discrepancy between the two accounts requires no comment.

he would have conformed to the King's pleasure; for he was master of a noble fortune in land, and rich in money; of an ancient family and well allied; his affections to the Government were good; and no man less desired to see the nation involved in a civil war than he: and when he accepted this employment from the Parliament, he never imagined it would engage him in rebellion, but believed that the King would find it necessary to comply with the advice of his two houses, and that the preserving that Magazine from being possessed by him would likewise prevent any possible rupture into arms.[1]

But yet another consideration weighed heavily with Hotham in this the most crucial moment of his career. While it may well have seemed to him that, since the Parliament had appointed him to his present office, his first duty lay in not betraying the trust which that body had reposed in him, he was aware of the antipathy displayed towards him in the past by the King, and a warning had been privately conveyed to him that if he once admitted Charles to the city his life would pay the forfeit. "Sir John Hotham," relates Cholmley, "when he departed from London gave assurances to some of his nearest friends that he would not deny the King entrance into Hull, and surely he had not done it, but that he was informed by some person near the King, in case he permitted his Majesty entrance, he would lose his head; and it is conceived the same person did most prompt the King to go to Hull." Although Charles subsequently denied having had any such intention[2] and spoke Hotham fair with many assurances of favour and forgiveness, yet in this instance, as in so many others, the real cause for what ensued may be attributed to the scanty reliance which could be placed in the Royal word. The promises of Charles were as froth, his stability nil; and a monarch who had abandoned Strafford to the block might well be feared by a subject whose devotion to his service had been intermittent.

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, Chapter XVIII, page 346.

[2] Despite this assertion on the part of the King, evidence was later given in the House to show that one motive in his visit to Hull was to hang the Governor. See the inquiry in the House of Commons on April 30th, 1642, when a witness, one Egleston, gave evidence "that on the Friday before the King came, he was told to tell Sir John that if the King should enter the town, his (Hotham's) life would be in danger" (*Journal of the House of Commons*, April 30th, 1642. See also *Parliamentary History*, Vol. X, page 161 and sequel).

In short, Sir John, distracted at the decision which he found himself called upon to make, consulted hastily with some of the principal townsfolk, and finding them unanimous in the conclusion that the King must not be permitted to enter the town, he dispatched a messenger to His Majesty beseeching him "to decline his intended visit, since the Governor could not, without betraying the trust committed to him, set open the gates to so great a train as he was at present attended with."[1]

Possibly Charles would have been well advised to avoid forcing matters to a crisis; but the dilemma in which he was placed on receipt of this message almost rivalled that in which Hotham found himself. To retire at the command of a subject would be ignominious; to persist in a demand which he was not strong enough to enforce might prove more so. Under such circumstances Charles, without hesitation, acted in conformity with his autocratic temperament and his conviction of the divine right of kings. Highly incensed at what he deemed the insolent behaviour of Hotham, he hastened on to Hull, and the messenger returned with all speed to Sir John bearing the unwelcome tidings that the King was rapidly approaching. At this the Governor ordered the gates to be shut, the bridges to be drawn up, the inhabitants to remain in their houses till sunset, the cannons to be ready charged, and the soldiers to "stand to their arms round the walls."

Ere noon—one account says soon after eleven o'clock—Charles arrived outside the entrance to the city, Beverley Gate.[2] He appeared surprised at the warlike preparations which met his eye, and at once demanded to see the Governor. Hotham, who was at that moment engaged in entertaining the Royal Princes, proceeded with what reluctance may be imagined to obey the fateful summons. On his way through the town, however, he encountered the Mayor and a party of townsfolk assembling to welcome his Majesty, and he peremptorily ordered them to return to their respective homes. On reaching Beverley Gate he mounted the city walls to parley with the King, whereupon Charles at once commanded him on his allegiance to open the gates and to admit his Sovereign.

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 346.

[2] Pulled down in 1776.

Then was witnessed a strange scene, which Tickell describes as follows. Sir John " with several professions of duty and many expressions of fear told his Majesty ' That he durst not open the gates to him, being entrusted by the Parliament with the safety of the town.' The King (who apparently was well informed of the actual facts of the case) then told him ' That he believed he had no order from the Parliament to shut the gates against him or to keep him out of the town.' To which he (Sir John) replied ' That his Majesty's train was so great, that if it were admitted, he should not be able to give a good account of his trust to those that employed him.' "[1]

Charles, snatching eagerly at this solution, offered to enter with twenty of his attendants only, and that the rest should stay without the gates.[2] This proposal, however, the Governor again refused. Charles then desired him " to come out of the gates, that he might confer more particularly with him, and assured him, on his royal word, of safety and liberty to return." But Sir John, recognising the worthlessness of such a promise, refused to quit his present safety. The King then, greatly angered, told him " That as this act of his was unparalleled, so it would produce some notable effect ; that it was not possible for him to sit down under such an indignity, but that he should immediately proclaim him traitor, and proceed against him as such : that this disobedience of his would probably bring many miseries upon the kingdom, and, in its consequence, might cause much loss of blood : and therefore he further advised him to think seriously of it, that the growth of so many calamities might be prevented, which, if they took place, must lie heavy on his conscience."

On this spirited remonstrance, with much distraction in his looks, Sir John began to talk confusedly of " The trust he had received from the Parliament " ; then, falling on his knees, he fervently expressed the wish " That God would bring confusion upon him and his, if he were not a faithful and

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 247.

[2] Hotham himself, and the historian Thomas Gent, both mention this incident as having occurred in the evening. Hotham, however, adds : " but I do not well remember it." Tickell, page 349, footnote.

loyal subject ; but, in conclusion, plainly denied his Majesty admission to the town."[1]

A strange sight, truly, as Tickell points out, "*to see the Governor, with every appearance of fidelity and respect, refuse on his knees to admit the person of his Sovereign.*"[2] But it was a sight at which the anger of the Royalist party blazed forth. There were loud cries from not a few of the King's followers to those within the city to kill the traitorous Governor and throw his body down.[3] Gent, indeed, states that "his Majesty, enrag'd," himself "cry'd out *Fling the Traytor over the wall, throw the Rebel into the ditch!*"[4] The position for Hotham was doubtless critical. He saw, as he afterwards related, that the townsmen began to waver, and that the Mayor, in defiance of his express command, had come upon the walls, and was "receiving from his Majesty many gracious words."[5] Yet when Charles ordered this latter official to ensure to his King the entrance which the Governor had denied, the Mayor, fearful of acting in opposition to the Parliament, hypocritically fell on his knees and with "Tears running down his Cheeks, 'My Liege,' said he, 'how glad I should be to obey you, were it in my Power : but alas ! both I and the Inhabitants are guarded, as well as the Gates ; where Soldiers stand, with drawn swords, having orders to take away the Lives of those Persons who shall dare attempt

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, pages 331–2. This interview between Charles and the Governor is differently reported by various authorities. Thomas Gent, in his *History of Hull*, 1735, states that Sir John answered the King roughly, but in the account which Sir John personally gave to the Parliament he says, "I, *in the most humble manner I was able to express myself*, begged his Majesty to take my case into his most princely consideration : that I had that place delivered to me in the sacred name of TRUST : that I could not satisfy him at that time, without incurring to me and my posterity the odious name of villain and faith-breaker ; that he would for that time withdraw, and if my being in the town gave him the least offence, if he would give me leave to advertise the parliament, I should get myself discharged never to come here : but nothing I could say would give any satisfaction to his Majesty, etc." Tickell, page 349.

[2] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 345.

[3] *Ibid.*, page 349, footnote.

[4] *History of Hull*, by Thomas Gent, originally printed 1735, edition 1869, page 145.

[5] Tickell, page 349, footnote. Rushworth, however, says: "During all which time not the least disturbance was offered to Sir John Hotham or his soldiers from the Townsmen, although they exceeded their numbers, but rather encouragement and offers of assistance if need should require."

to open them.' "[1] In short, Charles was edified by the curious spectacle of two of his subjects, protected by cannon upon the walls of his city, both upon their knees and even with tears, proclaiming for him a loyalty which was profound, while firmly refusing to obey his commands!

To Hotham, however, in the dual peril in which he was now placed, retreat from the course which he had adopted was become impossible; to deny a Sovereign admission to his own city was an act of open rebellion from which there was no appeal, and a further act of aggression was committed by him in his refusal, for a time, to allow the Princes who were within the town to quit it.[2] At one o'clock, however, he at length granted permission for their departure; and family tradition further asserts that he caused refreshments to be lowered from the walls of the town to the King and his attendants, but if this were the case, it appears doubtful whether the pride of Charles and his followers would permit them to regale themselves with food thus proffered. Meantime the hours must have passed for Sir John with leaden feet while without the gates the King and his train continued to parley; and to Charles, as he still tarried beside the walls of Hull, incensed and insulted, the ignominy of the situation must surely have been heightened by a recollection of that other April morning when he had visited the coveted seaport—when he had been greeted with waving banners, joyous shouts, and the delirious gladness of ostensibly devoted citizens. But there was, presumably, no "Hull favour" in the King's cap on this momentous St. George's Day, while memory, with a cruel vividness, painted the contrast between his present and his former reception, and while, little as he knew it, were being decided for him the mighty issues of life and death. . . .

Till four o'clock the King waited; then, apparently in order to procure some much-needed food, he retired to a little house adjacent; whence, an hour later, he returned to offer the rebels of Hull one last chance of repentance and restitution.

[1] *History of Hull, by* Thomas Gent, page 145.

[2] See Charles's letter to the Parliament demanding the punishment of Sir John Hotham: "One circumstance his Majesty cannot forget that his son the Duke of York and his nephew the Prince Elector, having gone thither the day before, Sir John Hotham delayed letting them out to his Majesty till after some consultation." Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 354.

"About five o'clock, having given Sir John one hour to take his final resolution, His Majesty returned to the gate, and receiving the same answer as before, he ordered two heralds at arms to proclaim the Governor a traitor; to which proclamation was added that all who obeyed him should be guilty of high treason; and having thus effectually menaced the Governor, he returned to Beverley where he lodged that night."[1] None the less, on the morrow he decided to make yet another attempt to gain that admission into the rebellious town which was so all-important to him. Therefore, early that day, Sunday, April 24th, he dispatched the "Herald of Richmond" and the "Herald of Chester" to Hotham with a message. They, however, were not admitted into the city, and must have delivered their proclamation without the gates, while the Governor stood upon the walls to receive it:—

Sir John Hotham, His Majesty hath commanded us to let you know that he hopes that having slept upon it and better considered it, you will not refuse to admit His Majesty into the town, and therefore His Majesty once more by us offers you his grace, favour, and pardon, if you will let His Majesty in, His Majesty's intention being only to see the magazine. Otherwise, if His Majesty shall be enforced to raise the county, you must look for worse conditions.

Then Sir John, from the walls, dictated to them his reply:—

Gentlemen, pray return my most humble and hearty thanks to His Majesty for this great favour being so full of grace. As you are officers of honour pray let His Majesty know that I have perused all my papers and orders of Parliament, and find I cannot do it without betraying the great trust reposed on me, and therefore I humbly beg His Majesty's pardon, hoping I may live to do His Majesty service.[2]

On receipt of this answer, Charles, burning with indignation, returned to York, and that same day sent an express to the two Houses of Parliament, informing them of what had occurred, and demanding justice on Sir John Hotham who had been guilty of high treason. But the Parliament, overjoyed

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 352.

[2] *Rariora*, Vol. I, pages 14 and 15, where facsimiles of these messages are given.

to find that Hull was still in their possession, unhesitatingly applauded the action of Sir John, both Houses later passing a vote of thanks to him and resolving that if he should die, his son was to succeed him as Governor of Hull.

To be defied by a subject was sufficiently humiliating to the King, but that such defiance should be publicly ratified and approved by the governing body in the land was an insult which the proud spirit of Charles could ill brook. For a time, a paper warfare on the subject was waged between the King and his Parliament, displaying, if Charles personally was the author of the correspondence attributed to him, no mean capacity for argument on his part. But all was of no avail. The irrevocable step had been taken. All shallow pretence of unity between the King and the Commons was at an end. And Sir John Hotham, the man of "anxious temperament" and "perplexed understanding," on that memorable day when he stood upon the walls of Hull and refused admission to his Sovereign, may be said to have cast the die which resulted in civil war throughout the land; in the ultimate loss to Charles of his kingdom and his life; and the ultimate gain to England of a liberty of speech and action worth the sea of blood which was expended to purchase it.

CHAPTER III

THE GOVERNOR OF HULL—(*continued*)

CHARLES did not immediately abandon all hope of securing Hull. Aware that he could not accomplish this by force of arms he had recourse to strategy. He employed one Mr. Beckwith, a gentleman of Beverley, to attempt to suborn by bribery certain of the officers in authority in the town, and many showed readiness to conform to the suggestion. This coming to the knowledge of Sir John Hotham, he at once assembled a council of war, whereat it was resolved to feign compliance with the designs of Charles, to admit the Royalists into the town, and then cut them to pieces. But to the credit of Hotham it must be recorded that, despite the extreme difficulty of his position, he firmly refused to sanction the treacherous proposal of his counsellors, stating that he would "never shed blood while it was in his power to save it"; and he further acted in a manner which must be characterised as straightforward to both factions. He dispatched his secretary to the King to announce that, since the plot had been discovered, his Majesty "might spare himself the trouble of carrying on the contrivance," while he sent an express to Parliament giving an account of the affair. A vote of thanks was at once accorded to Hotham by that body, Beckwith was declared by them to be a delinquent, and orders were issued by them for his arrest. But the King rescued him, observing dryly, and with some reason, that "when the Parliament gave him justice against Sir John Hotham, he would deliver Beckwith up to them."[1]

Seeing that his efforts to secure Hull by strategy were useless, Charles proceeded to put himself in a state of defence.

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, pages 383–5.

On the 12th of May he summoned the loyal gentlemen of Yorkshire to meet him at York, and informed them that he wished to have protection for his person. Two hundred immediately formed themselves into a bodyguard under the command of the Prince of Wales, with Sir Francis Wortley[1] as Lieutenant-Colonel, and to these were added a regiment of six hundred foot of the train bands commanded by Sir Robert Strickland. The Parliament, alarmed at this action of the King, declared that he was "levying forces to subdue them"; and at once issued pamphlets for the people with divers arresting titles. One ran as follows:—

Horrible news from York, Hull, and Newcastle concerning the King's Majesty's intent to take up arms against the Parliament: with his Majesty's threatenings to imprison the Lord Fairfax, Sir Philip Stapleton, and the rest of the Committee appointed by the Parliament to sit in York.

Another runs:—

More news from Hull; or a most happy and fortunate prevention of a most hellish and devilish plot, occasioned by some unquiet and discontented spirits against the town of Hull, endeavouring to command their admittance by casting balls of wildfire into the town, which by polity and treaty they could not obtain.

The identity of the "unquiet and discontented spirits" who by means of wildfire balls endeavoured to achieve those ends which by "polity and treaty" they could not attain, is only darkly hinted; but meanwhile Sir John Hotham, doubtless mindful of the previous predicament in which he had been deliberately abandoned by the Parliament, and alarmed at the growing strength of the King, made the curious petition that he might have the support of a resident Committee of the House to assist him in the Government of Hull. Besides the diminution of personal responsibility which he evidently thus wished to secure, he probably likewise hoped to lessen the extreme difficulty which he was experiencing in getting funds for the adequate defence of the city. The House agreed to his

[1] Sir Francis Wortley was created a baronet in 1621. A devoted Royalist, in 1644 he was taken prisoner at Walton House, near Wakefield, his estate sequestered, and himself sent to the Tower where he remained in captivity for many years.

demand ; and on May 18th a committee of seven gentlemen was appointed for the purpose indicated, among whom was the Governor's own son, John Hotham. The latter, with some of his colleagues, arrived in Hull ten days later, bearing, however, such extensive powers and instructions, that besides being an aid to Sir John they appeared to be in a position to control him.

As previously suggested, various are the accounts given of this younger John Hotham, usually known as Captain Hotham, who from this time forward figured prominently in the great struggle. Some historians depict him, in what followed, as led astray by the bad influence of his father ; others maintain that the misfortunes of the parent were directly due to the unscrupulous conduct of the son. But all concur that Captain Hotham was a brilliant soldier and a valiant man ; while it would certainly appear that he was a stronger nature for good or for evil than was the Governor. " Few men of the time," we are told, " were more praised and more abused than was the younger Hotham. His reckless and dare-devil character was one peculiarly suited to those rough times, and his name was a byword for bravery and audacity throughout the length and breadth of Yorkshire."[1] Indeed, a fighter from his earliest years, at twenty he had served at the siege of Bois-le-duc under Lord Vere of Tilbury, when among his companions in arms were Thomas Fairfax, afterwards the celebrated Commander for the Commonwealth, and a young officer later known to the world as the famous Marshal Turenne.

Early thrown into the society of patriots, young Hotham was, at the commencement of his career, a far more pronounced Parliamentarian than his father ; and, arrived in Hull, he lost no time in making his influence felt. Tickell tells us that " About this time, young Hotham caused divers curious reports, fabricated on purpose to inspire terror and keep the town in a constant state of alarm, to be industriously circulated." These reports were indeed so ridiculous that they give one a far from flattering idea of the intelligence of the inhabitants of Hull at that date. Hotham told them that the Lord Dunbar kept many horses and armed men underground in spacious vaults and gloomy caverns, in order to surprise

[1] *The Wrays of Glentworth*, page 33.

"CAPTAIN" HOTHAM
HE REPRESENTED SCARBOROUGH IN THE LONG PARLIAMENT
BEHEADED ON TOWER HILL, JANUARY 1ST, 1644—5

them whilst they slept! That Mr. Terwhit, a gentleman of Lincolnshire, was to assist their enemies with three hundred men, all covered with complete armour of burnished steel; and that the Spaniards were expected with a mighty fleet to aid these terrible adversaries. "On this very extraordinary intelligence the garrison was considerably increased, and parties were sent out to plunder the Royalists, under pretence of searching for arms and getting intelligence."[1] Yet while young Hotham was thus enflaming the hearts of the citizens with fables, the situation of the Governor remained one of increasing anxiety. A further attempt on Hull by the Royalists might be anticipated in the near future, but at the very moment when it was imperative to strengthen his position he was in dire straits for money wherewith to pay his troops. Under such conditions he had recourse to his friend John Hampden,[2] begging the latter to exercise his influence with Parliament to secure for Hull the men and money so urgently needed. A correspondence ensued between these two men, and since the letters of Hampden are full of interest and have never before been published, they are worth perusal, all the more in view of the curious contrast afforded by the two correspondents. For Hampden, single-minded and of profound enthusiasm, unlike Hotham, never wavered in his outlook upon contemporary events. Always a patriot, from the first he recognised that in his generation loyalty was incompatible with that patriotism; and while Hotham, in those days of stress, appears eternally striving to reconcile the two, Hampden persistently distrusted Charles and consistently adhered to the popular party.

John Hampden to Sir John Hotham

Sr,

I went frm this towne into Buckinghamshire on Monday morning last where I haue bene till now about the Militia of that County. During this absence I find you have bene pleased to fauour mee with two of yor letters wch my brother Pym readd when I was away, & the latter of them he imparted

[1] Tickell, page 375.

[2] John Hampden was the eldest son of William Hampden, Bucks, and his mother, a daughter of Sir Henry Cromwell, was an aunt of Oliver Cromwell.

to the house as it was necessary he should, & is even now reeturning you the sense of the house in answer to it.

I see God hath shewed himselfe wonderfull on his deliverance of you from treachery,[1] and he that hath done it will still deliver.

I know not what hath passed the house in my absence, having bene here but about an hower, but I may tell you they seeme confident and secure aboue what I could expect, considering how great a noise the withdrawing of those Lords made in the country.[2] The Deputy Lieutenants of ye County [3] & ye Souldiers have performed their parts very well, & besides our trained bands wee haue many voluntiers that haue armed themselves at their oune charge and formed themselves into Bands. I have no more to write of at the present being such a Stranger here, but now you shall find mee ready to serve you here, and certainly I have very great cause, for by these your letters and confidence in mee you have obliged mee to make it my study how I may discharge that trust faithfully, w^ch^ upon all occasions I shall indeavour even with ye best affections of

Yo^r^ most assured friend and humble servant

Jo: Hampden.

My service to yo^r^ most noble sonne and Mr Pelham.[4]

(Addressed *ffor yor Selfe.*)

Hampden's second letter is dated June 7th, and is evidently in answer to one of Sir John's again begging the House to allow him to use some of the Lincolnshire train bands for the defence of Hull :—

The Same to the Same

Sr,

According to your desire expressed in yo^r^ letter of ye 3rd of this present, I obtained this inclosed order. The houses were very carefull to satisfy your desires, but it was not without feare that by ye stay of those gentlemen in Hull, the service of Lincolne^sh^ to which they were designed, might suffer pre-

[1] This allusion is to Beckwith's conspiracy (see page 50).

[2] This refers to the defection of thirty-six peers who, with the Lord Keeper Littleton, joined the King at York shortly before the letter was written.

[3] The appointment of the Lords Lieutenant, and the raising of the Militia were two of the privileges which the King refused to renounce.

[4] M.P. for Hull.

judice[1] which it will be your wisdom to prevent in the making vse of this order.

The house receaved yesterday the information of the great meeting at Yorke[2] upon which no conclusion can be made, since nothing was required of the people, nor anything declared by them. But the houses are much affected with ye carriage of my Lord of Lindsey and my Lord Savile that so violently hindered the delivery of the country's petition, and not a little sensible of the rescuing of Mr. Bethwick, they are very apprehensive now of the danger the King, Kingdome, & Parliament are in by reason of the dangerous counsailes, & are in a way to provide ye best they can for keeping of the peace wch I assure my selfe is y^ier principal ayme.

You cannot but heare how resolutely the Kingdome of Scotland hath carried themselves at Edenburgh. Therefore to take you up no more at this time, I present my service y^r noble sonne and Mr Pelham and rest ever,

Your assured friend,

(Signed) J. HAMPDEN.

June 7th.

The third letter of the patriot is dated June 14th, and is again in answer to one of Hotham's asking for money to pay his men, and also enquiring how he ought to treat those people in Hull who were in opposition to the Parliament :—

June 14th.

The Same to the Same

S^r,

I received yors of the 10th June I sent away mine this morning. I am very glad when I find you in life & chearefullnesse, notwithstanding difficultyes. The Lincolnshiere blades have carried themselves with great resolution ; [3] and I verily believe there will be many as little dawnted as they have bene ; yet what discouragements do these revolting Lords [4] indeavour to bring upon honest men. They voate as they do, execute ye voates as forwardly as any, then desert them, as if

[1] An allusion to the retention of the train bands of Lincolnshire for service in Hull.

[2] This was the great meeting at York on June 3rd, when Lord Lindsey and Lord Savile attempted to prevent Sir Thomas Fairfax from presenting a petition to the King (Markham's *Life of the Great Lord Fairfax*, page 47).

[3] An allusion, probably, to the raising of troops of horse in Lincolnshire under Sir Christopher Wray and others.

[4] Another allusion to the thirty-six peers who joined the King at York.

there were neither principle of conscience or honesty left among men, but I leave them to ye comfort they will find in this way.

Or Lord Lieutenant went away on Saturday night last & overtooke my Lord of Bristole at Sr Kenelme Digbye's mother's. But there be God be thanked of those noble Lords that will live & dye in doing their duty to ye vttmost. The townes also are more intire than ever. More of them than I could have imagined have declared themselves to assist in the last propositions [1] wch I ame sure you have seene. The Citty likewise continues full of affection to the parliament; they lent £100,000 very lately & when these propositions of horse & plate were made to them in a great assembly at Guild Hall, there were large testimonyes of approbation.

If there be the least stoppe of your mony lett mee heare instantly, all diligence shall be vsed for yr satisfaction & there will be a great readinesse in ye house to performe it. The orders you mention could not be propownded this morning. Some doubt ariseth to mee about that wch should be for ye malitious opposers of ye Parliament, because it is in the nature of a Warrant Dormant but send us up ye names of some of such & their faults, & you shall heare of vs quickly.

We believe the Danish Fleete is to fetch salt. Lett mee heare of you often & comand freely.

Yor Servant,
Jo: Hampden.

ffor Sr John Hotham
Governor of Hull.

Hampden wrote again the following morning telling Hotham that directions had been given for hastening the payment of his money :—

Sr,

I cannot write more by this than I did by the last, but that I have obtained a second direction from the House of Commons to the Committees of Lincolnshire to hasten the payment of yr money, which Mr Henry Peterham is to convey to them, and likewise an order for yr money collected in Hull to be paid to you. If there be any occasion I will write to you again by the post this evening. This with the tender of my service to yor selfe and yr noble sonne is all at this time.

Your faithful servant,
(Signed) J. Hampden.

June 14th.

ffor my worthy friend Sr John Hotham, Governor of Hull.

[1] Proposals for raising funds for the Parliament.

About this date there occurred an incident of considerable moment. For long, Charles had been in greater straits for men and money than had Sir John Hotham. Clarendon relates that at one time he had not " one barrel of powder, nor one musket, nor any other provision necessary for an army ; and what was worse, was not sure of any port to which they might be securely assigned ; nor had he money for the support of his table for one year." He, however, dispatched the Queen, Henrietta Maria, to Holland, where, by the sale of her own and the Crown jewels, together with the assistance of the Prince of Orange, she purchased a supply of arms and ammunition. These were sent in a small ship called the *Providence*, which, to avoid being captured by the enemy, its captain ordered to be run aground in Keyingham Creek, close to Burlington, in Holderness.

Directly news to this effect was brought to Sir John Hotham, he dispatched a strong party from his garrison at Hull to take the vessel and secure her cargo. But the train bands of Holderness routed them, the *Providence* was unloaded, and the arms and ammunition safely conveyed to the King at York.

The King, being now in a better position to sustain his power, sent word to the Parliament that he intended to besiege Hull unless they delivered that town up to him ; and Sir John learning that Charles was at Beverley with the intention of carrying this threat into execution, at once sent three messengers in quick succession requesting His Majesty to desist from such a course, for, he asserted, this " City is the King's and all its inhabitants his loyal and faithful subjects, who are resolved always to continue so." But Charles again failed to appreciate professions of loyalty accompanied by acts of rebellion ; he detained the messengers, and Sir John Hotham, greatly irritated by this treatment, prepared for a resolute defence. Houses without Hull were forthwith demolished to prevent the besiegers lodging in them, the walls and forts were furnished with guns, before each gate a battery was placed, and finally the sluices were cut so that the country surrounding the city for two miles was laid under water. The morning after this drastic measure had been resorted to, Sir John sent a messenger to the Parliament to inform them of

these transactions, and to assure them "*that neither fortune, wife, nor children, should make him desert the good cause he had espoused, for the safety of the king's person, the defence of both houses of Parliament, and for the preservation of the religion, laws, liberties, and peace of the kingdom: that he would sacrifice his life rather than surrender a town of such importance to their enemies, whose design was to enslave them.*"

Still, it will be seen in this message, Sir John continued to draw a sharp distinction between the King himself and the King's evil advisers, between the safety of the King's person, and the desired downfall of those who were alike enemies of the Sovereign and the State. He resolutely refused to admit that the monarch and his Parliament could be at actual enmity; he clung persistently to the belief that, in thus struggling for the ultimate welfare of both Sovereign and people, he was playing a part of greater faithfulness to his King than those who pandered to Charles's fatal policy of an autocratic Government; and he still cherished the delusion that the opposing aims of the two factions in the State would be brought into harmony. In this attitude, as before pointed out, he was not singular; it was the position still verbally maintained by Parliament itself, by the less fanatical among Hotham's contemporaries, even by his apparently inflexible son who, in a manifesto issued in 1642, likewise announced his desire to "bring to punishment those that have been the cause of all these unhappy breaches betwixt the King and his people." Meanwhile that the Governor was held by Parliament to be heart-whole in the cause of liberty is evinced by another letter written to him at this critical juncture by John Hampden:—

John Hampden to Sir John Hotham

Sir,

Mr Hill that brought yr letters of the twelfth of July arrived here yesterday morning. Sr Phillip Stapleton[1] was gone down to ye King so I opened yor ppackket. This morning order is yssued for the payment of yr garrison and to provide you with necessaries. Ffor six pieces of ordnance to be sent

[1] Hotham's son-in-law and a prominent M.P. He was one of the deputation that took the Commons' petition to the King, Lord Holland and Sir John Holland being the other members.

you, and for thanks to be presented to Captain Moyer and Captain Piggott, and for the release of Captain Homer. The men that are to supply yr Garrison are many of them shipped, and the rest will follow soone after.

Your courage and constancy hath demonstrated that Hull is tenable for above five houres, which has been opposed by diverse arguments.

The General hath his ordinance passed (by) both Houses.[1] My Lord of Bedford is chosen General of the Horse.

Wee are of opinion the King's forces will not stay long before Hull, but that he will march southwards, yet six pieces of ordnance shall be presently sent you, or at least some of them. Wee should be glad to hear from you oftener. I hope this Messenger will propound you a safe and speedy way for writing me. If you finde that there be truth in that plott of firing the towne I pray let us know the pticulars, for it is very necessary wee should have information of them. This enclosed message of the King came from Beverley upon Munday, and the petition went away upon Wednesday. There is no expresse, howsoever, returned, but wee know it will be such an one as will not be very welcome when it comes.[2]

They speak from Co^rt^ of great forces, and no lesse confidence, but wee are not easily induced to believe it, yet there are persons ill affected enough to Parlyman^t^ working in every corner; but the Lord in Heaven will pleade for his poore servants, and either give us peace or preserve us from violence. There is a comittee of Lords and Comons chosen for the safety of the Kingdome. Wee shall take care of effecting yo^r^ desires and returning yo^r^ answers. You may do very well to send us up the names of yo^r^ prisoners, off wch I have taken care that none shall be released wthout the knowledge of the Comittee, who will be very carefull that you sustain no prejudice therein. There shall be present order taken to send you meate, cheese, etc., I can thinke of nothing else. Mr Hill is to deliver you £3,000, and you shall have more very shortly.

It will be good to know whether you will not need a Collonel or Lieutenant-Collonel to be sent to you when you have so many men. Among the captaines that now come to you I recomend unto your care my nephew Hamond, in whom you may fully confide. The rest are strangers to mee, but I hope

[1] An allusion to Essex's appointment.

[2] This paragraph shows that Parliament did not expect the King to agree to their terms.

they will acquitt themselves like souldiers and men of honor. Mr Hill speaks of great outrages cõmitted by the Cavaliers,[1] especially upon the families and goods of such as have come into you to Hull. If it be possible let us have certain intelligence of the truth of this, and as p^ticularly as you can be informed, for if this be the begining of their behavior before they can be sure of the event, men may easily judge what the end will be if they should p^rvaile.

You shall receive herewith an order for thanks to be given to Captain Moyer[2] and Captain Piggott for their good service, if there had bene time it should have come with a pticular letter, but the Cõmittee is extreamely full of businesse, and I hope this will sattisfy them for the prsent, who may justly expect a realle reward hereafter.

Yor faithfull servant,

Jo. Hampden.

Westminster,
July 18th, 1642.
ffor my much honoured friend S^r John Hotham,
Governor of Hull, these.

[This letter, unlike the others, is in a clerk's handwriting, and is probably a copy of the original document put in at Hotham's trial to prove the House had a great opinion of his courage and ability.]

Yet at the very date when Hampden, burning with zeal, was thus pouring out his hopes, his fears, and his schemes for the presumably sympathetic consideration of Hotham, the latter, if history relates true, was torn by emotions little suspected by the stalwart Parliamentarian. The story is as follows.

Charles, with an inadequate force, marched to Hull, besieged it rigorously, but failed to take it ; and on July 27th retired first to Beverley, then back to the loyal town of York. Many people thereupon expressed surprise that, being obviously not in a position to encompass the downfall of one of the strongest fortresses in the kingdom, the King had acted in a manner so foolish and inexplicable. Lord Clarendon, however, professes to give the following explanation of this apparent mystery.

[1] The inhumanity of the Cavaliers alienated the sympathy of many from the King's cause. At Pomfret especially they treated some of their prisoners with great barbarity (*Wrays of Glentworth*, II, page 39).

[2] Commander of the Parliament's war vessel the *Hercules*.

Lord Digby, son of the Earl of Bristol, who was devoted to the cause of the King, had been sent over from Holland by the Queen to concert with Charles a plan of operations. He was taken prisoner by the Parliament's ships ; but being very cleverly disguised as a Frenchman and speaking the language perfectly, he escaped detection, all the more easily that he feigned to be suffering from sea-sickness, and under this pretext remained in the hold of the ship till he reached Hull. Arrived there, however, his plight was desperate, for discovery appeared unavoidable, and he believed that Hotham, whose prisoner he had now become, was one of his bitterest foes.

Nevertheless, with rare courage, he determined to risk all upon a venture as precarious as was his situation. Speaking broken English, he desired his guard to beg the Governor to grant him a personal interview, promising, if this were done, to reveal " some secrets of the King's and Queen's that would highly advance the service of the Parliament."

Sir John, who understood French, at once sent for the prisoner, and the latter was brought into a room where he and several other gentlemen were assembled, many of whom, being lately returned from France, could likewise converse in that language. Lord Digby for some time cleverly sustained the part he had adopted. He answered all the questions which were put to him, he pretended to reveal the plans of the King, he thoroughly deceived his interlocutors. At last he announced that he had some information which he could impart to the Governor only, and requested Hotham to grant him a private interview. Hotham demurred, being, according to Clarendon, " a man apt enough to fear for his own safety," and further being afraid of jealousy on the part of his son and others who were " in truth but spies over him." He therefore refused to venture into a room alone with the supposed Frenchman, but consented to withdraw with the prisoner into a great window out of earshot of the company, where he requested the latter to say what he wished. Then Lord Digby, seeing that he had no chance of greater privacy, chanced all upon the hazard of the die. Dropping his French accent, he spoke four words in plain English—" *Do you know me?* " Sir John, considerably startled, replied " No." " Then," rejoined Lord Digby, " I shall try whether I know Sir John Hotham, and whether he

be in truth the same man of honour I have always taken him to be." Thereupon Digby informed the astonished Governor who he was, concluding with the remark that he hoped the latter "was too much of a gentleman to deliver him up a sacrifice to their rage and fury who, he well knew, were his implacable enemies."

The position in which Hotham found himself may well be imagined. The company in the room beyond were watching the interview with curiosity, possibly with mistrust. Even the change of countenance of which he had involuntarily been guilty at the unexpected information imparted to him might have been observed by them; and it was urgent that he should avert suspicion from himself and a man whom, relying upon his honour, he could not betray. He hurriedly desired Digby to say no more for the present; assured him "that he should not be sorry for the trust he reposed in him and should find him the same man he thought him," also "that he would find some time, as soon as conveniently he might, to have some more conference with him." That in the meantime Digby "must content himself with the ill-accommodation he had, the amendment whereof would beget suspicion." Then, hurriedly calling the guard, he gave orders that the unwelcome prisoner should be instantly removed, and roughly bade them "to have a very strict eye upon him." Next, full of anxiety to mislead those present, "he turned to the company, and being conscious to himself of the trouble and disorder of his countenance, he told them that the Frenchman was a shrewd fellow, and understood more of the Queen's counsels and designs than a man would suspect: that he had told him that which Parliament would be glad to know, to whom presently he would make dispatch, though he had not yet so clear information as, he presumed, he should have after two or three days; and so departed to his chamber."[1]

At the earliest opportunity Hotham arranged an interview with the supposed French prisoner, when he assured Lord Digby that, since he had trusted him, he "would encompass his safety and speedy release." Hotham is represented as adding that "he would not trust any person living with the

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 441 *et seq.*, footnote.

secret, and least of all his son, whom he mentioned with all the bitterness imaginable as a man of ill-nature and furiously addicted to the worst designs the Parliament had, or could have; and one that was more depended on by them than himself and sent thither only as a spy upon him." He next, we are told, entered upon "a discourse of the times and the mischief that was likely to befall the whole kingdom from the difference between the King and the parliament." Then lamented his own fate "that, being a man of very different principles from those who drove things to this extremity, and of entire affection and duty to the King, he should be looked upon as the chief ground and cause of the civil war which was to ensue, by his not opening the ports when the King would have entered the town, of which business and all the circumstances relating to it he spake at large, and avowed that the information sent him of the King's purpose to hang him was the true cause of his having proceeded in that manner."[1]

Not very profound arguments, apparently, were needed to persuade a man in such mood to return to his allegiance to the King. It is stated that Digby forthwith concerted with Hotham that the King should besiege Hull, and that Hotham, having made a feint of resistance, should deliver up the fortress to the Sovereign whom he still desired to serve. And although, when it came to the point, Hotham either feared to take action or found it impracticable owing to the incorruptibility of the officers with whom he was associated, in this secret understanding with the Governor of the beleaguered town, it was asserted, is to be found the true explanation why Charles risked besieging Hull with an obviously inadequate force.[2]

Now whatever the accuracy of this story, the truth of which it is evident only Lord Digby was in a position to attest, the conversation thus attributed to Hotham is sufficiently striking and bears the impress of truth. While little excuse can be offered for his conduct if, at the moment when he was assuring Parliament that he would never deliver up the city to

[1] Tickell's *History of Hull*, page 444, footnote.

[2] Gent, it must be noted, gives a somewhat different version of this story, and makes it appear that Digby's visit to Hull was subsequent, not previous, to the attempt by Charles upon the town.

their opponents he was actually plotting to do so, the fact remains that he did not prove faithless to his trust, and that no evidence can conclusively be adduced to prove that he ever contemplated such an action at this juncture. On the other hand, that from this date he began to slacken in his always half-hearted allegiance to the Parliament, and that, from a standpoint openly acknowledged by himself, he was justified in so doing, is amply apparent. As Cholmley pointed out in regard to the Puritan faction "*for more than concerned the civil liberty he* (*Hotham*) *did not approve of their ways*"; and there were many like himself who, eager in the cause of reform, yet when they found that matters were tending to a conclusion they had never contemplated—that civil war was imminent and that no midway course was longer possible between loyalty and open rebellion—shrank appalled from the latter issue. And this reported conversation with Digby reveals Hotham as so many of his utterances reveal him, a man who had drifted hesitatingly and by stress of circumstance into the position he then held; who had hoped—possibly still hoped—to reconcile the liberty of the subject with loyalty to the monarch; who, horror-stricken at the approach of war and at the part which he had played in bringing this about, was willing to support the King could but reliance be placed upon the King's support. Not only is this in accordance with the sentiments to which Hotham had never ceased to give expression, but we actually find him boldly proclaiming the same to Parliament itself. In October or November, 1642, he wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons, and later sent copies to the Earls of Northumberland and Holland of a remarkable letter which has never before been published, and which throws a new and striking light upon his character.

My Noble Lord,

You may if you please peruse this inclosed coppy and by it perceive what is already done, another to yat purpose went from another place. I hope no just nor honest man dislikes it, for he that desires not a good peace deserves ill of this poore country which has given him his subsistence.

My Lord, there is no man that hath any reasonable share in the Comon Wealth can desire that either side shall be absolute conquerors, for it will be then as it was betwixt Cæsar and

Pompey, whosoever had the better the Roman liberty was sure to have the worst. I honour the King as much as any, & love the Parliament, but doe not desire to see either absolute conqueror, it is too great a temptation to courses of violence.

My Lord, there is one thing more which I feare much, that if the honorb^le endeavours of such powerfull men as yourselfe doe not take place for a happy peace, the necessitous people of the whole kingdome will presently rise in mighty numbers, and whosoever they ptend for att first, within a while they will sett up for themselves to the utter ruine of all the Nobility and Gentry of the kingdome. I speak not this merely at random, the West part of this county affords mighty numbers of them w^ch, I am very confident you will see necessitated & urged to rise in far greater bodyes than thrice the armies that are already gathered here. My Lord, necessity teaches us to seek a subsistence, and if this unruly rout haue once cast the rider, itt will run like wildfire in the Example throughout all the Counties of England.

My Lord, I shall humbly desire yor pardon for this greate digression, and for my venturing to ppse those things to a judgm^t so much greater than mine, but yor Lordsp^e's favours as they have obliged, so now they have imboldened

Your most faithfull affectionate servant,

Cawood. (Signed) JOHN HOTHAM.[1]

"*I honour the King as much as any and love the Parliament, but I do not desire to see either absolute conqueror, it is too great a temptation to courses of violence.*" Therein we have probably an epitome of the true sentiments of Sir John Hotham. In what followed many base motives have been attributed to him—a desire of enriching himself, even by means of the foulest treachery; a fierce jealousy of the Fairfaxes, with whom he had a private family quarrel, and whom Parliament, unmindful of his faithful services, preferred before him; more than all, the anxiety to be able to make his cause good with whichever party in the State should eventually prove victorious. But his letter quoted above is not that of a man lacking in either courage or sincerity; it proclaims his views with a frankness which is audacious, and it was obviously not calculated to curry favour with the men to whom it was

[1] This being one of the copies of the original letter to the Speaker is dated January 9th, 1643.

addressed. Rushworth, indeed, is of opinion that it roused the animosity of Parliament,[1] and that their subsequent distrust of Hotham was one of the strongest factors in his defection from their cause. Yet even if the fidelity of the Governor was already suspected by some portion of the House, the patriots Pym and Hampden obviously remained unshaken in their belief in him. On October 4th Hampden addressed a letter to "*My much Hon^rd friend Sr Jo: Hotham Kt. and Bart. Gouernor of the toune of Hull,*" in which, as though fearful of his affection for Hotham being doubted, he exhibits even greater warmth of friendship than was his wont, and lays emphasis on his desire—

to giue you this Assurance that the euidence you haue giuen to all the World by your noble actions of that Judgment and honesty wch is in you ; shall neuer be called in question by mee upon slight grounds. And therefore let me desire this Justice from you that you will not beleeue of me otherwise than what I now professe vpon any misinformation untill you do me the fauaour to let me answer for my self.

The letter further assures Hotham "We are sending horse and foote to your noble sonne wth all speed," and concludes "I shall trouble you noe further att this time, but shall ever bee your most faithfull devouted Servant." John Pym likewise at this date was equally emphatic in the expression of his adherence to Hotham, and a letter of great interest from him may be given *in extenso*:—

John Pym to Sir John Hotham

Noble Sr

I receiued your short letter of this week in the house. I am very heartily sorry you are in such straites, I assure you it

[1] "I have been informed by a Gentleman that was Sir John Hotham's Secretary at that time, . . . that about three weeks before the fight at Edge-Hill Sir John Hotham sent a Letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, another to the Earl of Northumberland, and a third to the Earl of Holland, the subject matter of all Three being earnest Arguments to persuade them to use their Endeavours and improve their Interest to induce the Parliament to come to an Accomodation with the King before Matters came to extremity. . . . And that these Letters begot an ill Opinion of Sir John Hotham amongst some powerful Members . . . copies of these letters were communicated to those that bore him ill will in the House of Commons ; upon which Jealousies were much increased against him. This is the account given by Sir John Hotham's Secretary, who is yet living." Rushworth, *Collections*, Part III, Vol. II, page 175.

wanted no remembrance or sollicitation neither in the house nor at the committee, but truly wee have had so little mony come in of late that the whole army was even ready to disbandon, and the garrisons of Portsmouth, Dover, Plimouth, Chattham & others are much longer behinde than you, but now the citty is gotten such a vaine of giving mony & I hope wee are in a way of provyding a certayne proportion . . . of the charges.

The house is very sensible of your wantes & have taken it into serious consideration how speedily to supply you, so do the committee & I hope it will quickly come to your handes. It is now likewise taken into consideration to write to the town to put soldiers upon billet for a fortnight or thereabouts within wch time I doubt not but wee shall send you a considerable sum of mony, but this was not fully resolved, only the house comanded a letter to be written to you acknowledging the great services you have done & the estimation they have of your meritt and the desire they have for your contentm^{t} . . . it is now left to be donn by the Comittee of the Safety, from whom I believe you will very shortly receive it and I hope the certain donation of a good sum of mony.

I am very glad to hear of the success wch your Sonn hath had of his campaigne, & his severall deliverances,[1] above all I rejoyce to hear that you & my Ld Fairfax do concurr so well in the comon service.

I am one of the Comittee of ye Lords and Commons who are to goe to my Ld Generall [Essex] early to-morrow to consult with him & the Counsell of war about some conditions of a cessation of hostilities wch though I hope wee may contrive to do [and] without any great inconvenience it may bee assented to, yet truly, we shall find many withoute doubte of objectiors, as soone as it is resolved we will take care to give you notice, but till you heare from us I praye take care not to slack the industry of the Army there, for your success & forwardnesse will much advantage us in the county. Wee have it in our care to save you from more uneasiness.

I pray rest assured of my readiness to serve you wth the affectionate support & endeavours of

yours faithful & humble servant

Jo: Pym.

Oct. 20 1642.

Just now a messenger who came to mee out of Holland doth assure me that he saw the Queen embarqued upon Thursday

[1] Captain Hotham's success at Cawood and elsewhere.

last so that I believe she will be at Newcastle before this letter can come to you. She brings with her 150 thous[d] pound in mony & store of Armes & munition. What opportunity of service this will afford you before such supply can pass from Newcastle to York you can best judge.

For my very noble friend Sr John Hotham Gouernor of Hull.

This letter was endorsed by Sir John with obvious satisfaction "*A letter thanking me for my good services and rejoycing att ye agreement*"; and indeed it would seem to show that, at what was evidently a most critical period in the fortunes of the Commonwealth, a majority in the House still exhibited, or feigned to exhibit, implicit satisfaction in the devotion of the Governor of Hull to their cause.

Still less, as yet, was young Hotham credited with any disposition to change in his fealty to the Parliament. Tickell asserts that it was principally the Captain's unswerving adherence to the Commonwealth which prevented his father from fulfilling the intention of delivering up Hull to the King. Certainly in the autumn of 1642 the Captain covered himself with glory battling on its behalf. In October, by a brilliant feat of arms, he gained possession of Cawood Castle; as Lieutenant-General of the Parliamentary forces he fought valiantly with the Fairfaxes against Sir Thomas Glemham; "when it was known that the Earl of Newcastle was going to march into Yorkshire at the head of an army of 8000 men, Captain Hotham, with the confidence of a brave and reckless leader, determined to oppose the Earl's progress";[1] and on December 1st he headed a forlorn hope to prevent the passage of the Royalist forces over the Tee, on which occasion, though the small Roundhead army was overpowered by superior odds, the dauntless courage of its leader was strikingly illustrated. "If I be knocked on the head, I need no winter jerkin!" he remarks characteristically in one letter; while most of his utterances proclaim him gallant, impetuous and greatly daring. Still more, the literature of the period is flooded with anecdotes respecting him which, whether true or false, serve to show the estimation in which he was held. We are told how the Archbishop of York, having offended him by some

[1] *The Wrays of Glentworth*, by C. Dalton (privately printed 1881), Vol. II, page 39.

disparaging comments upon his disloyalty, fled terrified at news of his approach to Cawood, for the Captain had vowed to cut off the prelate's head "and he was one that never promised a bad turn but he paid it."[1] We are told how, on one occasion, he cleverly sent a running footboy with a forged note signed *Will. Newcastle* to the Earl of Newport, ordering that Commander to forbear coming to the assistance of the other Royalist forces, by which prank the Earl was deceived, and the little army of Lord Fairfax was saved from defeat at Tadcaster. We learn how, on October 25th, 1642, in the House there was "a letter read which came from Captain Hotham" describing the efficient manner in which he had fortified Cawood, "with which, by the Grace of God, he makes no question but by the assistance of the Lord Fairfax to roote out the residue of the Cavaliers in the county in three weeks more or lesse"[2]—a boast which, however vain it proved, portrays at least the breezy optimism of an intrepid soldier. That any cause could operate to seduce so active a supporter from the Parliament seems at first incredible; but, as pointed out by Sir Hugh Cholmley,[3] who himself went over to the Royalist side in 1643, young Hotham was of a disposition which could ill brook control. He undoubtedly viewed the appointment of Lord Fairfax to the command of the forces in Yorkshire as a slight to his father, while his own satisfaction on receiving the appointment of Lieutenant-General under the command of Lord Essex, on February 1st, 1643, was marred by the knowledge that Sir Thomas Fairfax, who was a year younger than himself, was promoted to the superior rank of General of Horse. Yet while impatience at the Fairfaxes thus being preferred before himself and his father probably operated in lessening his ardour for the cause which he had hitherto hotly espoused, family tradition assigns another and more romantic reason for his defection.

On February 20th, 1643, Queen Henrietta Maria disembarked in Bridlington Bay with arms and ammunition brought from abroad. It was pointed out later that although the

[1] Markham's *Life of Fairfax*, page 67.
[2] *The Wrays of Glentworth*, Vol. I, page 234.
[3] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 182.

Hothams could have put into the field from 1500 to 2000 men, and though they were supported by the warships of the Parliament, they made no attempt to prevent either the landing of the Queen or the removal to York of the ammunition which she brought. Further, according to Clarendon, both father and son having at this date decided to aid the King, Captain Hotham[1] secretly visited Henrietta Maria to ascertain what might be expected from the Royalists by way of payment for these renegade services, demanding, it was asserted, £20,000 in cash, a viscounty and life-governorship of Hull for his father, and a barony for himself. But, as before pointed out, the statements of Clarendon, who was evidently bitterly prejudiced against the Hothams, must be accepted with extreme caution. On the other hand, the family tradition referred to, though unsupported by evidence, is at least plausible.

This relates that Captain Hotham, ostensibly to treat with the Royalist leader about an exchange of prisoners, visited Newcastle at Bridlington, and thus renewed acquaintance with a man who had formerly been his friend. The impetuous young Roundhead, already dissatisfied with the manner in which Parliament had requited his brilliant services, was then persuaded to visit the Queen who had recently landed. Admitted into her presence, he was allowed to kiss her hand. The portraits of Henrietta Maria leave no doubt respecting her charm; her liquid, almond-shaped eyes, her delicate olive complexion, the combined daintiness, piquancy and dignity of her whole bearing still live vividly for us on the canvases of Vandyck. It is evident that she would exercise to the utmost her power of fascination in order to secure to her husband's cause so important an ally as the gallant young officer, involving, as his allegiance would do, the prospect of a speedy possession of the coveted city of Hull. Small wonder, then, if the beauty and the gracious demeanour of the Queen towards the impulsive soldier made on him the impression which history states they undoubtedly produced in the maturer bosom of Cholmley who joined the Royalists after a similar interview. Hotham, it is said, returned from his audience

[1] Although a Lieut.-General in the Parliamentary forces, he is always called by historians "Captain Hotham," and appears to the last so to have termed himself (see his petition, page 92).

sworn to the service of Henrietta Maria and treasuring her image in his heart.[1]

Whatever the truth of this tale—which seems strangely reminiscent of the spell once exercised by another French Queen over the long-dead Prelate of Ely—in the early part of 1643 there is no doubt that John Hotham the younger was veering towards the Royalist party. A correspondence begun with Lord Newcastle relative to that contemplated exchange of prisoners, drifted rapidly into assertions on the Captain's part of his goodwill towards the cause of the King—with, however, certain reservations. On February 11th he writes to Newcastle :—

I hope to see the endeavours of honest men prevail so far . . . that wee shall once again see peace and truth in our days, and I wish with all my hearte that which side soever will not condescend to waive trifles for the settlement of Church and State, that his own side may leave him. For my own parte, rather than be a slave to either I would live on bread and water in another kingdome.

It must be remarked that this coincides with the views which, about the same period, we find likewise expressed by the elder Hotham in a correspondence with Newcastle, although his attitude in regard to the peace of the realm was often misrepresented by his contemporaries, as by subsequent historians.[2] Early in March, 1643, a final effort was made by

[1] Mrs. Hutchinson relates *re* Queen Henrietta Maria's landing : " Thither came to her the Earl of Montrose, out of Scotland, with a hundred and twenty horse : then Sir Hugh Cholmly, governor of Scarborough, revolted from the Parliament, whereof he was a member, and came to the Queen, with three hundred men. Then had the Queen's practices wrought so upon the two Hothams, that their treason was not altogether undiscerned ; but my Lord Fairfax, having only strong presumptions, and no power to secure them, while they had the strong town of Hull in their hands, all he could do was to be vigilant and silent, till God should give opportunity to secure that great danger " (*Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his widow Lucy. Edition 1905, page 148).

[2] Mr. Charles Dalton, in his *History of the Wrays of Glentworth*, Vol. II, page 48, states that Hotham " was much against peace, as both he and his son considered the war as a means of enriching themselves," an obviously unjust statement, since not only does all Hotham's correspondence advocate peace, but his worst enemies admitted that his anxiety to avoid civil war was one of the reasons of his fatal indecision. In the same month, when the verses quoted on page 72 made their appearance, Hotham was writing to Newcastle :—

" I am very sorry to hear that your Lordship hath any intention to make this poor country the seat of war. I am sure the clamour of all our friends

the moderate party to promote an understanding between the King and his Parliament in order to avoid further bloodshed. But the proposed treaty fell through ; and a curious broadside was printed at Oxford that month professing to give the utterance of various members in the House upon the attempt. In this the opinion of the Governor of Hull is satirically given as follows :—

Foh, said Sir John Hotham,
Is this a time to Treate
When Newcastle and Cumberland
Thee to the wall have beate.
Yee base obedient Citizens,
Do yee thinke to save your Lives,
My soone and I will serve you all,
As I have served five Wives.

How opposed to reality were the sentiments attributed to Sir John by this political squib is illustrated by his own pen. On March 22nd, 1643 (new style), he wrote to Newcastle :—

Your Lordship knows that I ever said unto you that I would do anything that might further His Majesty's service in the Peace of the Kingdom, and that if the Parliament did stand upon unreasonable terms with him, I would then declare myself against them (and for him ;) but otherwise to leave my party that I had set up with, and no real cause given that an honest man may justify himself for so doing before God and the World, I never would do it, although I endured all the extremities in the World, for I know no man of honour or worth will ever think such a man worthy of friendship or trust. . . .

In the same letter with regard to the desertion of Cholmley to the Royalists' cause the Governor adds philosophically— " For Sir Hugh Chomley [*sic*] and his manner of coming in, *every man must satisfy his own conscience, and then all is well ;*

and neighbours injured by it will make us ashamed to be seen with those that are actors in it. My Lord, these counsels may get your soldiers pillage, yourself neither friends nor strength . . . for myself and friends, nothing can be of that bad consequence to us as the utter ruin of all our friends, tenants and neighbours ; we can then be no worse, we are fitted for desperation. This is all submitted to your deep judgment by your most faithful and affectionate servant, John Hotham." Beverley, March 2nd, 1642 (old style), 1643 (new style).

Space will, unfortunately, not permit the correspondence of the Hothams with Newcastle being quoted in full in the present volume, and the reader must form his opinion from the brief extracts which it is possible to include here.

all are not of one mind." After which, having thanked Newcastle for not " spoiling the East Riding," he expressed a hope that in thus purposely forbearing to attack that portion of the county in which the Hothams had an interest " your lordship will not suffer anything of prejudice either in your honour or affairs," but should there be any danger of this, " you may take what course you please, and we shall do so for our offence." After which curious mingling of sentiments pacific and defensive, he concludes with apparent earnestness :—

My Lord, if it please God that wee once join and that I be thought worthy of your friendshippe, it shall be seen you have got a friend that will not leave you for every wind, or hope, or fear. My Lord, we shall now soon see whether the King will be refused just things, which if he bee, I shall take no long time to resolve. If the Parliament offer all fairness, and it be obstinately refused, truly I will not forsake them, come the worst that can come ; for this I conceive is just and honest, and from that ground it is not fitt for him that values his honour to recede.

Again nothing can be more reasonable than the statement set forth in this letter or presented with a greater appearance of frankness. If the demands of the Parliament proved unjust, the Governor asserts, then he intends to side with the monarch ; if, as hitherto, the Parliament continues to approach Charles in " all fairness," and the King obstinately refuses their legitimate demands, then he will not forsake their cause, " come the worst that can come." And it must in justice be conceded that such sentiments were announced by Sir John without reservation, alike to Royalists and to Roundheads—both to the Speaker, the representative of the Parliament, and to Newcastle, the representative of the King's cause ; while again it must be recalled that his attitude at this juncture was shared by many former Parliamentarian officers who, as evinced by Cholmley, Lord Clare,[1] and others, held themselves justified in deserting their former leaders if the latter adopted a policy which they themselves disapproved, but who, in certain instances, while yet awaiting the development of that policy,

[1] " The Earl of Clare was very often of both parties, and I think never advantaged either " (*Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his widow Lucy, page 117).

continued to fight conscientiously for the cause to which they were still nominally pledged. "Nothing but a sense of honour to perform the public trust I have undertaken hath held me in these wars," Sir John wrote again wearily to Newcastle at the same date—and be it borne in mind the public trust thus mentioned to the Royalist commander was that bestowed by the Parliament—"I shall and do intend to serve His Majesty, but I cannot do it so unseasonably as to make my so doing of no advantage to him and a dishonour to myself."

Nevertheless the mass of the people, being strongly opposed to warfare, was ready to recognise in the professed champions of liberty greater tyrants in the making than those against whom they were called upon to contend. Sir John was undoubtedly included in the wrath of the populace on this count, and even the patriot Pym, described by Clarendon as "the most popular man," suffered on the same grounds. Indeed, one day when both Sir John and Pym were presumably in the House, there occurred an incident indicative of this spirit, which may well have occasioned them some surprise.

"There marched to Westminster in procession," we are told, "three thousand female orators," gaily dressed and wearing white silk ribbons in their hats. These ladies presented to the Commons a petition for peace, and being far from satisfied with the evasive answer which this solicited, "they came in tumultuous manner to the door of the House, exclaiming '*Peace! Peace! Give us those traitors who are against peace! Give us that Dog Pym!*'" The politicians within ungallantly gave orders to the train bands in the vicinity to fire upon the aggressive females with powder in order to frighten them away; but the ladies laughed at the attempt, and finding a heap of brickbats conveniently handy in the yards, they proceeded to pelt their opponents and the sentinels to such purpose that these were forced to find ignominious safety in flight. Thereat the grave Parliamentarians, considerably disconcerted by this routing of their protectors, sent for troops to scatter the Amazons, and the soldiers "after using fair words in vain, drew their swords and wounded several. A ballad singer was killed on the spot, and another of these heroines lost her nose before they were dispersed." Nor does the historian commiserate such a result—he appears more

scandalised at the effrontery of the ladies than in sympathy with its motive. "Two of the most creditable authors have differed in their accounts of this tumult," he concludes; "the first says that many were killed and wounded, and that the combatants were the wives of substantial citizens; the other that they were the meaner sort of people, which seems to be the most probable, *the other being scarcely credible.*"[1]

But while Sir John was obviously included in the popular resentment as a promoter of warfare—even, it is to be presumed, in the wrath of these fearless Amazons—the correspondence in which he advocated peace was none the less incriminating in the eyes of his colleagues. Moreover it further invited a dual accusation of treachery, in that the sympathies of both father and son remained too long undetermined—undeclared; that too long they strove to serve two masters. In the case of the younger Hotham he was undoubtedly battling with professed ardour for the Parliament while secretly making overtures to the Royalists; in the case of the elder, hesitation appears to have been his greatest crime—an indecision which swayed him first to one course, then to another. And while the fanatic who plunges blindly into an undivided service is at least credited by friend and foe alike with sincerity of purpose, the man who balances claims and issues—and who may, in that very uncertainty, be yet more profoundly honest—inevitably appears a traitor to both the factions between which he wavers. So it was with Sir John Hotham, and the end was not long delayed.

[1] The *History of Kingston-on-Hull*, by George Hadley, page 194.

CHAPTER IV

NEMESIS

IT is again stated that Sir John Hotham entered into a treaty with the King to deliver up Hull. This was never proved, but there is much to support the contention, since it appears that the Royalist party, whether deliberately duped in the matter or not, certainly expected this consummation. There is little doubt that the Queen was in communication with Sir John, as well as with his son, and that she expressed great impatience at the delay of the former to conform to her wishes. Also it is evident that Digby was more than once sent by the King to hold further parley with the Governor in regard to the same matter. "There was no positive engagement to quit the Parliament," asserts Cholmley, when a Royalist, "though without doubt they (the Hothams) had not only inclination but resolution to do it, but steered themselves with so much cautiousness as it could not carry a blessing with it. For if they had immediately declared for the King, questionless they might have mastered Hull by their own power, or at least they might have had that from my Lord Newcastle would have prevented their being surprised."[1]

Meanwhile rumours of the disaffection of the Governor reached the Commons, and towards the end of March or beginning of April, Charles sent Lord Digby secretly to show Sir John some letters from the Parliament which had been intercepted by the Royalists and which proved conclusively that the integrity of the Governor was now suspected by that body. This, Charles doubtless hoped, might confirm Hotham in the disposition to throw in his fortunes with

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 182.

SIR JOHN HOTHAM, THE FIRST BARONET
THE GOVERNOR OF HULL
From an original drawing in the Pepys collection at Magdalen College, Cambridge

the Royal cause ; but what had immediately operated at this juncture in bringing to a head the distrust of the Commons, despite the services which Sir John was still rendering them, is not clear. Rushworth states, what may have been a current rumour but what is extremely improbable in view of the correspondence extant, that Newcastle, irritated at Hotham's hesitation in surrendering Hull to the King, revealed his disaffection to Lord Fairfax. Clarendon, on the contrary, writes that Sir John tried to tamper with the captain of a Parliamentary ship at Hull, and that the latter gave information against him. But whatever the immediate cause for suspicion, in the spring of 1643 the leaders in the House, in order to probe certain rumours, employed one of their chaplains, a kinsman of Hotham, John Saltmarshe, whom it is said they bribed by an offer of £2000 to go down to Hull, to court the confidence of the Governor, and to report the result.

And Sir John readily fell into the trap. As before pointed out, he appears to have been gifted with none of the reticence or the cunning of the true conspirator. He unburdened himself to Saltmarshe as frankly as he had done to Digby. The treacherous ecclesiastic at once sent a messenger with the information thus gleaned to Parliament, and further warned Captain Moyer of the war-vessel *Hercules*, then at Hull, not to leave the port, as it was feared an attempt might be made to hand over the town to Newcastle.

The evil star of the Hothams was now in the ascendant. The report sent by Saltmarshe reached Parliament towards the end of May, and in June came news of the conduct of Captain Hotham which further alarmed them. The young officer had been sent with Cromwell and other commanders of the Parliamentary forces to the defence of Nottingham, and had there, it was said, refused to recognise any authority but his own. No doubt much jealousy and emulation existed among the rival military leaders, and young Hotham, as we have seen, was not without certain just cause of complaint ; yet not only did he resist the interference of the other officers in command, but he unfortunately roused the enmity of two men with whom it was dangerous to quarrel—Colonel Hutchinson and Colonel Cromwell. Lucy, the widow and biographer of the former, relates angrily how, " in the Whitsun holidays,

1643," when five or six thousand troops were united at Nottingham under the commander-in-chief, Lord Grey, " the younger Hotham also brought some rude troops out of Yorkshire and joined himself to them " ; how subsequently he plundered friend and foe alike—possibly at this date when he was professing allegiance to both parties it was difficult to distinguish between the two!—and how, when Colonel Hutchinson remonstrated with him on this account, Hotham, who " had a great deal of wicked wit," replied that " he fought for liberty and expected it in all things!" Colonel Hutchinson, whose *forte*, by the showing of his widow, did not lie in a gift of repartee, failed to appreciate the aptness of this rejoinder. " Replies followed," relates Mrs. Hutchinson with profound gravity, " and they grew to high language, Hotham bidding him, if he found himself grieved, to complain to the parliament. Mr. Hutchinson was passionately concerned, and this being in the open field, Colonel Cromwell, who had likewise had great provocations from him, began to show himself affected with the county's injuries, and the idle waste of such a considerable force, through the inexperience of the chief commander, and the disobedience and irregularity of the others. So they, at that time, being equally zealous for the public service, advised together to seek a remedy, *and dispatched away a post to London, who had no greater joy in the world than such employments as tended to the displacing of great persons, whether they deserved it or not ;* him they sent away immediately from the place to inform the parliament of Hotham's carriages, and the strong presumptions they had of his treachery, and the ill management of their forces. This they two did, *without the privity of any of the other gentlemen or commanders ;* some of whom were little less suspected themselves, and others as my Lord Grey, through credulous good nature, were too great favourers of the Hothams."[1]

The extreme *naïveté* with which this account reveals the personal spite by which the two accusers were actuated, and the extreme suitability to their purpose of the messenger they selected, requires no emphasis. Hotham had indeed cause to fear the resentment of Cromwell, for during a dispute between

[1] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his widow Lucy (ed. 1905), pages 151–2. The italics are not in the original.

them one day, the hot-tempered young officer had turned the guns upon the future Protector and fiercely threatened to discharge them. But though on another occasion he had similarly offered to do battle with Lord Grey because the latter had refused to supply him with some oats, Lord Grey was one to forget words spoken in the heat of passion, while Cromwell was one to remember. Further, a suspicion now being afloat that young Hotham was in constant communication with the Queen at Newark, served to lend a more serious complexion to his unruly behaviour, and Cromwell therein did not fail to recognise his own opportunity. Mrs. Hutchinson relates how the messenger sent to Parliament "was very diligent in his charge, and returned as soon as possible, with a commitment of Hotham; who accordingly was made prisoner in Nottingham Castle."[1]

The description of the manner in which this was effected, subsequently sent up to the House by Sir John Hotham and his partisans, was as follows :—

At midnight forty rogues (for we have not better language for them) broke into Captain Hotham's chamber, took him out of his bed, plundered him of all that little money he had, being about one hundred and fifty pounds, and also of his horse, clothes, and whatever his servants had; carried him to the common gaol, there kept him four days, refused to give him liberty to write, either to the Parliament, the Lord Essex, the committee of Lincoln, or his father; and all this was done by Cromwell without the privity of Sir John Gell, Sir Miles Hubbert, Colonel Pierpont, and the officers of these regiments;

[1] The following is the entry in the *Journal of the House of Commons* :—

"21st June, 1643. Mr. Pym reports from the Committee of the safety of the Kingdom, that they had received a letter from My Lord General, that he had given directions to the Commanders of the army at Nottingham to commit Captain Hotham, which they had done accordingly, to the castle of Nottingham. That the reasons were that two gentlemen came from thence with instructions in writing from Lord Gray and Colonel Cromwell, and the committee there, to inform the Committee of Safety of Mr. Hotham's plundering of divers persons of great affection to the Parliament. That he did of his own accord send messages to Newark, and received messages back in a private manner; and lately turned two pieces of ordnance against Colonel Cromwell; and also in a difference between him and Lord Gray as to some oats, which Lord Gray refused to give him, he proffered him to withdraw his forces, and he would draw out his and decide the quarrel; that this Committee did accordingly acquaint my Lord General with the same, whereupon he gave warrant for apprehending."

Ordered, "that a conference be arranged with the Lords concerning the state of the army at Nottingham."

being demanded if they could show any warrant from the Parliament, they confessed that they had none but a verbal message from my Lord General and the close committee, which, for our parts, we cannot yet believe.[1]

If this presents a true relation of what occurred, the proceedings seem to have been unduly high-handed, all the more that young Hotham occupied a prominent position in the army of the Commonwealth. Nor was he of a nature to bear such treatment patiently. Greatly incensed, he rashly sent an old family servant[2] to the Queen with news of what had taken place, promising that if she would rescue him, he would serve her with fidelity in the future, and that not only Hull, but also Beverley and Lincoln should be hers. The Queen sent assurances of her sympathy and succour; but subsequently the troops of Lord Grey who were deputed to conduct Captain Hotham a prisoner to London, probably with the connivance of their commander, suffered him to escape. Hotham thereupon sent an official notification of his proceedings to Parliament; and rejoined his father at Hull.[3]

When news first reached the Governor of the indignity to which his son had been subjected through the interference of Cromwell, his indignation knew no bounds. He gave vent to the most abusive and threatening language respecting both that officer and the Parliament for having countenanced such a proceeding—which remarks were duly reported against him. Next, summoning a Council of War, he framed the strong protest to the House, already mentioned. But meanwhile Captain Hotham, for his part, apparently feeling that, after the treatment he had received, his wavering politics were determined for all time and that he could serve the Commons

[1] *The Wrays of Glentworth*, Vol. II, pages 53–4. A very remarkable account is also given by Mrs. Hutchinson of Cromwell's subsequent attitude towards Colonel Hutchinson, of whom he seems to have cherished a certain fear in consequence of this officer's action in regard to Captain Hotham. "Those who knew the opinion Cromwell afterwards had of Mr. Hutchinson," she says, "believed he registered this business in his mind as long as he lived, and made it his care to prevent him from being in any power or capacity to pursue him to the same punishment when he deserved it; but from that time, growing into more intimate acquaintance with him, he always used to profess the most heartfelt affections for him, and the greatest delight in his plainness and open-handedness that was imaginable" (see page 152).

[2] This man was afterwards one of the witnesses against him.

[3] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol II, page 182.

no longer, indited to Newcastle a letter, on June 28th,[1] in which occurs the following decisive passage :—

The malice of my enemies hath been violent against me, but God hath delivered me out of their hands ; I never expected better from the popularity ; for none of those ever reward their best citizens with anything but death or banishment ; as I resolved I would never forsake the party I had undertaken until they had (without cause given by me) so disobliged me that no man can think that my honour or honesty is further engaged to serve them. I confess I now think myself a free man from them and resolve by the grace of God never to serve them more. . . . As soon as I have dispatched here, I shall attend you to know your commands.

The Parliament, now thoroughly distrusting both the Hothams and greatly disquieted at learning that the Captain had rejoined his father at Hull, sent instructions to Sir Matthew Boynton and to Captain Moyer of the *Hercules* to watch closely the movements of both the Governor and his son. Shortly afterwards Moyer received from Sir John strict orders to quit Hull on April 28th, and this having strongly roused the suspicions of the former, he was the recipient of further information which led him to believe that upon the night of the 28th, or on the day following, a plot concerted by the Hothams to surrender the town to the King would be put into execution. The danger was imminent, and Moyer having conferred privately with the Mayor, they decided to act with the promptitude which the situation seemed to require.

Early on the morning of June 29th, therefore, Moyer landing with a hundred resolute men seized the blockhouses. The Mayor, at the same time, with 1500 soldiers and citizens, took possession of the magazine and ordnance, arrested Captain Hotham, and placed a guard round the house of the Governor. In little over an hour the town had thus been secured without a drop of blood having been spilt.

Cleverly planned as had been this manœuvre, one eventuality had not been provided against. The Governor had received a timely warning, and ere the soldiers were stationed

[1] Tickell gives the date of this letter as June 18th, and it has been pointed out that this is evidently a clerical error for the 28th, as it was written the day before the Captain was arrested in Hull, whence the letter is dated. On the 18th he was in Nottingham.

round his house, he had escaped by a private way. Accompanied by six of his guards, he hastened towards Beverley Gate, where he found that the sentinels had as yet received no orders to stop him. He further had the good fortune to encounter a man riding into the town whom he ordered to dismount, and taking the horse which the fellow had bestrode, he galloped away with all speed through the gates. He was only just in time. Before he was out of sight of the town his guards were arrested, and his pursuers reaching the walls, a musket shot rang out, while a gunner discharged ineffectually after him one of those very pieces of ordnance which by his own orders had been placed upon the ramparts to defend Hull against the King.

With that sound ringing in his ears, Sir John knew well that his enemies would follow hard upon his track. All his energies were concentrated on reaching his house at Scorborough, only nine miles distant, which, in fear of misadventure, he had garrisoned and fortified. Could he but once gain this refuge, he might contrive to keep his foes at bay till succoured by his friends. But, fearful of continuing his course along the open road lest he should be overtaken, he adopted a more circuitous route, and turning towards Sculcoats, hastened to Stone Ferry, intending to cross the river into Holderness. Arrived there, however, he could find no boat, while the water was too deep and the current too strong for him to attempt to swim across. Therefore on he galloped again to Warnferry, only to meet with a similar disappointment. Every moment lost increased his danger, and in this dire strait only one chance remained to him. His sole hope now of gaining Scorborough lay in his being able to pass through Beverley before the news of his disaster had arrived there. If his pursuers had not yet reached that locality all might still be well.

Often as the Governor had faced death upon the battlefield, it must have been with feelings of trepidation that he turned about and hastened resolutely towards the adjacent town. He was now within a few miles of safety, and all depended on the issue of the next few moments. On the one hand lay sanctuary and everything that life held dear, on the other a fate from which the bravest would recoil. He galloped up to

the entrance gates, and found to his joy that he was allowed to pass unmolested through them. He galloped on down the wide street, and the aspect of the town was as usual. None stayed him, none molested him, only, arrived at the market-place, a sight met his eyes which for a moment gave him pause. Before him were seven or eight hundred armed men with whom the town was garrisoned ; but, after one moment of tense anxiety, he was reassured. The behaviour of the troops on seeing him showed him that, as yet, they knew nothing of the occurrence at Hull. Fortune as yet favoured him ; he rode up to them boldly, placed himself at their head, and ordered them to follow him. Without hesitation they obeyed, and Sir John, congratulating himself on the acquisition of this unexpected bodyguard, rode on confidently through the town.

Then, in the very moment when safety seemed ensured, he found that all was lost.

It appears that directly the escape of the Governor became known in Hull, Sir Matthew Boynton dispatched a messenger to his son Colonel Boynton in Beverley, warning him that if Sir John Hotham passed that way on his road to Scorborough, he was to be arrested. Owing to the fatal delay while Sir John searched vainly for a boat, the messenger had outstripped him, and although the news was not generally known in the town, Colonel Boynton had none the less been watching in readiness to intercept the fugitive's flight. The task was an unsavoury one, for the Boyntons, besides being neighbours, were connections of the Hothams,[1] but they were staunch adherents of the Parliament and duty precluded evasion. Suddenly, therefore, as Hotham rode fearlessly through the streets of Beverley, Colonel Boynton, with a troop of soldiers, intercepted his progress, and seizing the Governor's bridle explained his action as follows :—" Sir John, you are my prisoner. I am now obliged, with the utmost reluctance, to waive all tender attachments, and arrest you as a traitor to the Commonwealth."

History does not trouble to record the astonishment which

[1] They were not very near connections, although in several accounts Sir John is represented as here calling Colonel Boynton " nephew," an obvious error. The Governor's brother-in-law, John Anlaby, had married Colonel Boynton's sister, Dorothy.

these words must have produced, the surprise of the soldiers who had unhesitatingly obeyed the Governor, the commotion among the townsfolk; but even in that moment of despair Hotham seems to have preserved his dignity and assumed a nonchalance which he must have been far from feeling, if we may judge by the fashion of his rejoinder. "Well, Kinsman," he observed, "since it must be so and there is no remedy, I must be content and submit!"

This acquiescence was, however, but assumed. A moment later, seeing an open lane near him, Hotham wrenched his bridle from the grasp of the Colonel, put spurs to his horse, and made a last dash for freedom. Could he but out-distance his captors and cover the few remaining miles to Scorborough, all would be well. But Colonel Boynton was relentless in the execution of his duty. "Stop him or knock him down," he commanded; and one of the soldiers chasing Hotham gave him a blow on the head with the butt end of a musket which felled him to the earth, so that he was quickly secured. Bleeding and stunned as he must have been, he was then, by a strange coincidence, carried to the same house where the King had lodged after he had been refused admission to Hull; and this thenceforward enabled the Royalists to exult in the poetic justice of each stage of the fate which had overtaken the unhappy Governor. For he had fled as a fugitive from Hull through the very gate at which he had denied entrance to his Sovereign; there had been discharged after him one of the very pieces of ordnance which he had designed for his Royal master; and finally he was confined as a prisoner at Beverley in the very house where the King had sought refuge after being insulted by his rebellious subject.

By and by, despite the "barbarous usage" to which he had been subjected, the Governor, under a strong escort, was taken back to Hull. Re-entering as a captive that town where he had so long wielded supreme authority, and which he had quitted such a short time previously still full of hope and of a desperate courage, his cup of bitterness must have been full. There was, moreover, a peculiar irony about the conditions of his detention which must have accentuated its ignominy. He was, Cholmley states, "conducted by his own troops, of which many had a particular relation to him;

commanded by Legard, his near kinsman, whom he had raised and put into that employment. And yet there was not so much as a motion for his enlargement and escape, or much resentment for his suffering."[1] Indeed, Cholmley cannot refrain from observing that "it is most remarkable that he who had so much interest in those parts as none but himself could have put the town of Hull into that posture against the King, found not so much as one man to lift a hand in his behalf," and this the renegade Parliamentarian professes to explain as follows :—

Some of his (Hotham's) principal officers were corrupted and bribed against him, the hearts of his soldiers being much alienated by his being too straight-handed . . . the townsmen, though at first well affected to the King's cause, were yet so affrighted with the disorders of the Lord of Newcastle's army, they would not think of coming under that power ; Pelham, a townsman and one of the Burgesses in Parliament did much steer the inhabitants and did not love Sir John : the seamen who had great influence in this as in other maritime towns found it stand with their interest and trade to stick by the Parliament . . . and lastly there being many of the preciser clergy come hither for sanctuary, they neither loved Sir John nor he them ; of whom though he made use out of politic ends, he did as much disrelish their humour and ways as any man living ; and that they knew so well, as they did not only give all the information they knew against him to the Parliament, but underhand, fomented all sorts of people against him.[2]

Sir John, in short, had never cultivated that useful asset of his ancestor the capacity "for conciliating to himself the favours of men." He had neither courted popularity, nor pandered to the whims of the multitude ; and still more, although an advocate for civil liberty he had never upheld the religious tyranny of the Puritan faction, who now, in the day of disaster, showed their resentment. At every turn he was thus to discover that while the man in prosperity has many friends, the man in adversity has few ; but his sojourn in Hull, with its cruel humiliations, was, fortunately for himself, but brief. In company with his son he was speedily

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 184.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. LXXXVIII, page 184.

embarked on board the *Hercules* for London, where they arrived on July 15th, and, after a couple of preliminary examinations, were respectively committed to the Tower.

At this juncture Captain Hotham must have believed that he was more gravely involved than his father, in that he was aware his letter to Newcastle had been discovered in his room at the time of his arrest ; and realising too, that he was more culpable, he had a generous impulse " at their first commitment," and " gives under his hand in writing to his Father a paper which clears the Father from being privy to those treaties he had with Newcastle ; but apprehending afterwards that this might prejudice his own cause, he requires the sight of it, which after he got into his hands, he tore in pieces."[1]

On Sir John's first arrival in London, at his request " his lady[2] with her coach, children, servants, goods and plate " received a pass permitting them to come up from Yorkshire to be near him, for which journey the expenditure of twenty pounds was permitted ; further it was decided that throughout the term of his imprisonment, five pounds per week were to be paid from Sir John's own estate for his maintenance, while three were to be allowed out of the King's revenue for that of his son. But as, subsequently, month after month continued to pass wearily while the prisoners waited in vain for that trial at which they hoped to establish a satisfactory defence, we learn that Captain Hotham was suffering from ill health, while his father was afflicted with lameness, probably the result of the rough usage to which he had been subjected at Beverley. And while these two hardy soldiers languished thus in prison, a prey to mental and physical suffering, throughout the country stirring events were taking place in which they would fain have borne part. For the Civil War which Sir John had predicted raged throughout the land ; battles were won and lost ; fortune favoured now one side, now the other ; and the soil of England was red with the blood of her sons.

Only faint echoes of these events can have penetrated to the knowledge of the prisoners, who were allowed to speak

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 184.

[2] His fifth wife, Sara, daughter of Thomas Anlaby, of Etton, whom he married on May 7th, 1635.

with none save in the presence of a gaoler. Yet they may have heard how, following immediately upon their arrest, on June 30th the Fairfaxes were defeated at Atherton Moor, so that the elder commander took refuge in Hull. They may have learnt, too, how the King's party, ignorant of all that had occurred at that coveted seaport, marched confidently thither, anticipating, so it was universally believed, that the Hothams, father and son, were but waiting to deliver the town into their hands. At Beverley, however, Colonel Boynton repulsed these Royalist forces; and on July 25th, ten days after the sad arrival of the Hothams as prisoners in London, the Parliamentarian troops scored another triumph by the capture of Gainsborough. In connection with this event a curious incident happened which greatly impressed the fatalists of the day, and the tale of which, if it came to the knowledge of the Hothams, must have held for them a special significance.

The Earl of Kingston, unlike Sir John Hotham, had from the first openly proclaimed himself neutral, and resolutely asserted that he was indifferent to both the contending parties in the realm. He only, so he reiterated, desired peace with all men, and he was determined not to fight on either side. For long this greatly vexed the Parliamentarians who, fearing that he would eventually be persuaded into the service of the King, never ceased to importune him to embrace their cause. At length, exasperated at their persistence, Lord Kingston angrily called Heaven to witness that he would never enter the combat on behalf of either faction. "When," he exclaimed, "I take arms with the King against the Parliament, or with the Parliament against the King, let a cannon ball divide me between them." Despite his repeated assurances, however, as the Civil War developed, he was constrained to take up arms on behalf of Charles, and when Governor of Gainsborough, after a valiant defence, he was defeated as already stated. A fortnight later, on July 30th, he was put on board a pinnace to be sent a prisoner to Hull; but ere he reached the seaport, some of the King's forces on the shore perceiving that the vessel in which he sailed belonged to the enemy, and little dreaming that a partisan of their own was on board, began firing on it. At this Lord Kingston, seeing himself in danger of being killed by his own party, went up on deck to

show himself, in order that they might cease the attack. But at that very moment a cannon ball flew from the King's army which severed him in the middle, and so, "he perished according to his own unhappy imprecation." For thus, on board a ship of the Commonwealth, and cut in twain by the Royalist fire, he may literally be said in death to have had his person divided between the contending parties betwixt whom in life he had been equally divided in spirit!

So ran this tale, which doubtless reached the ears of Sir John Hotham; but if in it the unhappy prisoner saw presaged the fate of that man who too long failed to know his own mind, other and more definite reason for disquietude was his portion. Not only Hampden, his loyal friend, had died on June 24th, 1643, as the result of wounds, but within six months of that date, on December 8th, Pym followed his fellow patriot to the grave. Whatever might have been the opinion of these two men on the reported defection of Hotham from the cause which they had so much at heart, there is no doubt that, for the affection they bore him, they would have striven to save him from the vengeance of his accusers. But their protective influence was removed; and in its place he must have learnt of the growing ascendancy of the man whom he had offended, Oliver Cromwell, a foe implacable, relentless, and little likely to view with leniency the hesitation of a defaulter.

It was, however, not till Sir John had been kept a prisoner for seventeen weary months that at length it was decided to bring him to trial. That he was still suffering from lameness is evident from a curious petition framed by him which is extant among the Hotham muniments, and which runs as follows:—

Your petitioner prayeth y^{t} ye two spaces on each side of ye barr may be reserved for ye witnesses, and a place on each side made for them to ascend into ye court without disturbance of your petitioner att ye barr; and seeing your petitioner is lame and nott able to stand long at ye barr, and y^{t} ye place is, as he is informed, extreme inconvenient for your petitioner's restfull and quiett attendance to his defence that there may be some provision made of a seate behinde the barr and ye space railed in for your petitioner that he may not be pressed by ye bystanders, butt himselfe and those yt assist

him with his papers may have full roome quickly to learne what is spoken, and he is confident to giue this honourable Court satisfaction beseeming an honest and just man.

It was on November 30th, 1644, that Sir John was arraigned before a court martial at the Guildhall. About thirty witnesses were called for the prosecution[1] and the accused man, assisted by his son Durand, who had had legal training, conducted his defence with the greatest ability.[2] Whether that defence represented the truth is doubtful, but a man on trial for his life sets forth the plea which will best prevail with his judges. Hotham denied that he had ever intended to hand over Hull to the King ; he declared that in his correspondence with Newcastle and his action with regard to Lord Digby he was but duping and making use of the Royalists in the interest of the Parliament. " I adopted the same course with Beckwith," he argued ingeniously, " and you approved of it ; but had some enemy of mine acquainted you with what I was then doing, before the *dénouement*, I could with equal justice have been accused of treachery." This reasoning was irrefutable, and the prosecution appear to have failed entirely in their attempt to prove that the plot of which the prisoner was charged had ever existed. But the Presbyterian party and divers of the Independents, Cholmley points out, " were his mortal enemies." It was conclusively shown that he had uttered violent speeches against Cromwell and the Commonwealth in general " which much exasperated the whole party " ; and, still more, the accused who, whatever his failings, cringed to no man, " answered in blunt and rough terms, being inclinable that way by nature,"[3] to the last adopting the defiant attitude that " his services to the Parliament did much exceed his transgressions." There was sufficient evidence against him, it was held, to justify a conviction, and he was finally condemned to be executed on December 16th.

[1] One of the witnesses summoned was Saltmarshe, who had betrayed his confidence, and a powerful and pathetic letter to this kinsman from Durand Hotham is extant. (See *History and Chartulary of the Hothams of Scorborough*, page 159.)

[2] For the defence see *Ibid.*, pages 141–5. The original paper, which is in the possession of Lord Hotham, is in the writing of Sir John, but whether the argument it contains was principally prepared by him or by his son Durand cannot be said.

[3] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 184.

This verdict was given on December 7th. Lady Hotham at once petitioned for a pardon for her husband, and, though this was refused, his execution was delayed till December 24th in order to give him time to settle his affairs. On the 24th, however, another petition for a reprieve was presented, when again the execution was postponed till the last day of the year. At the very time when the Commons were actually debating this question, the trial of Captain Hotham likewise resulted in a sentence of death, but still neither father nor son despaired of ultimate pardon; they had many powerful friends and it was believed that, at the worst, but one life would be required in expiation of their fault.[1] Even the King, learning with ill-disguised satisfaction of their plight, mentioned this possibility when writing to his Queen from Oxford on December 30th :—

DEARE HART,

. . . God beginnes in a new way to show his justice upon this Rebellion, for Sir Alder Cary, heretofore a violent Rebell, is lately beheaded upon suspition of being Loyall, and it is believed that one or both of the Hothams will pass that same way.

And even as Charles sat writing this letter, the fate of Sir John was hanging anew in the balance. When he received the news that his son was condemned to death, he prepared another petition to the Lords praying that either his own life or that of his son might be spared for the sake of his family, and when this was read in the Upper House on December 28th, the Lords were favourably inclined to grant it. They resolved :—

That this petition be sent to the Commons and that they be desired to concur with this House that Sir John's life might be spared.[2]

To this message the Commons returned no immediate answer and on December 30th, the day previous to that fixed

[1] Cholmley relates that the friends of Sir John "thought, if his son were first executed, they should have power to save the Father," and "as the Father's friends expedited the son's trial, out of hopes to save the Father, so the Son endeavoured by all the means he could to have his Father executed, conceiving he might then save his own life." (See *Clarendon Papers*, Vol. II, pages 184–5. The petition presented by Captain Hotham serves to refute this latter statement.)

[2] *Parliamentary History*, Hansard, Vol. III, page 321.

for the execution of Sir John, the Lords sent another message to the Lower House, when, being still unable to get a reply, they took upon themselves to respite Hotham till January 4th.

But, that very afternoon, the Commons debated the question ; Cromwell, Hotham's most bitter enemy, himself being one of the tellers for the noes. Forty-six votes were recorded in favour of sparing the life of Sir John, ninety-six against.[1] And on the 31st the Commons sent a message to the Lords to inform them " that this House knows no reason why justice should not proceed against Sir John Hotham."

But they had left their decision till the last moment, and that being actually the day fixed for the execution, great multitudes of spectators had early assembled on Tower Hill, " and the scaffold, the coffin, the executioner, and all the dreadful apparatus were in readiness." About eleven o'clock Sir John was brought from the Tower, attended by the Lieutenant, the Provost Marshal, the guard and several gentlemen and ministers ; but as the sad procession approached the place of death, an official came riding from the House of Peers to announce that the execution was to be delayed till the following January 4th. This order had presumably been sent off by the Lords before the message from the Commons had reached the Upper House, and Hotham, by a doubtful mercy thus granted four more days of life, was conducted back to the Tower.

When, however, the Commons learnt what had happened they were highly incensed at this interference of the Lords. Sir John, indeed, seemed destined to cause dissension in his death as in his life ; and the Lower House forthwith resolved angrily that " no officer or minister of justice shall hereafter stay the execution of justice upon any order of reprieve from either House of Parliament, without consent of the other." They refused their sanction to the postponement of the execution, but, since it had previously been decided that Captain Hotham was to die upon January 1st, it was decided that his father should suffer on January 2nd.

[1] *Journals of the House of Commons*, December 30, 1644. Cholmley states " that when it came to a question in the House of Commons whether the judgment of the council of war should pass against them, it was carried by six voices against the Father, whereas there was not six persons spoke for the Son."

By this means it befell that the son was beheaded before the father, and there were those who saw in this the fulfilment of a prophetic vision. For in the interval between his first and his second reprieve, Sir John had dreamed a strange dream that he and his son had in certain matters exchanged their identity, and the superstitious recognised in this a foreshadowing of what now occurred in that father and son temporarily exchanged the evil fate which awaited them, it being so arranged that the son was to be laid in the very coffin and the very grave which had been prepared for his father.[1]

The night preceding the execution of the young officer, his wife Isabel,[2] from whom he had been separated during his imprisonment, was allowed to visit him in the Tower. She quitted him only in the morning when he was led out to die, and in the dawning of that year which to the one was to bring death and to the other bereavement, the sorrowful

[1] When all hope of saving Sir John's life was at an end, young Hotham ventured to petition on his own behalf, which was refused. Tickell, page 471, says that this petition was in Sir John's handwriting. It ran as follows, and it will be observed that although a Lieutenant-General in the Parliamentary forces, the petitioner is designated "Captain Hotham":—

"THE HUMBLE PETITION OF CAPTAIN JOHN HOTHAM HUMBLY SHEWETH

That he acknowledges his faults and his follies committed against you are so many, that all the punishment that you inflict will be according to justice. Your great and abundant favours he has requited with arrogance and negligence, so that if his knowledge of your great mercy to offenders did not encourage him, the consciousness of his own unworthiness would have kept him from hoping for a favour; but the cries and tears of a poor wife, helpless children and desolated family, have moved him a poor condemned commoner to fly for mercy to the Commons of England; and he has forborne thus long to petition you, because there were hopes your mercy would have been extended to his poor distressed father, and he would not give interruption to his petition, although it had cost him his life. Since, to his great grief, he hears the sentence is unrevoked, he humbly prays your great clemency and mercy will look upon him in the next place, and mitigate his heavy sentence of death into banishment and fine, or what other punishment you please, and your petitioner, his wife, and poor children will daily pray for prosperity to your affairs and will remain,

Your humble petitioner,
JOHN HOTHAM."

The fact that, in strong contrast to the action taken in his father's case, no effort was made by members in either House to obtain even a respite for the son, gives strength to the presumption that he was universally considered guilty.

[2] A daughter of Sir Henry Anderson, of Long Crowton, in Yorkshire.

couple bade each other a last farewell. Nine months later Isabel gave birth to a son who was named Henry, but who, the child of tears and grief, himself sank to an early grave.

After the sad parting with his wife young Hotham went quietly to the place appointed for his execution. Having ascended the scaffold, he joined in prayer for some time with the minister, and then made a long prayer himself, after which, rising up and going to the side of the platform, he addressed the people as follows :—

Gentlemen,

You see here in what condition I stand ; you all come here to look upon me as a spectacle of shame and justice ; and I believe a great many of you are possessed with very great crimes that I have committed of treason against the Parliament ; those things I must declare to you all that this conscience knows no guilt of ; I did engage myself in the Parliament's cause, I did them service of possessing Hull ; I preserved their Forts and Magazines ; I preserved their Towns and Forces wheresoever they came and never miscarried. It hath pleased God to bring me to this end for my sins to him which I acknowledge to be just, but not for any sins that I have committed in treason against the Parliament, neither do I know any treason or intention of treason in my poor father that lies in the same condition that I do, whatsoever other men do call treason. This I testify to you all here.

So far only is his speech recorded, but Cholmley hints that there was more of an incendiary nature. " He had been oftentimes heard to say (when he was in his greatest prosperity) that he did not expect any good from the Parliament ; States and Commonwealths never rewarding any man's merits but by death,"[1] and he seems in his last moments to have attempted to give vent to similar sentiments, for " beginning to speak sharply against the Council of War and the Parliament " he was interrupted. Mr. Coleman then prayed again, and the prisoner prepared himself for the block. Though gifted with but scanty patience, young Hotham had always proved of unflinching courage, and he now showed small concern in view of the headsman and all the gruesome preparations for his death. " He died like a Roman," relates Cholmley,

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 185.

and Tickell corroborates this, observing that "with considerable fortitude having laid his head down the executioner at one blow severed the body. His brother (Mr. Durand Hotham) immediately took it up, wrapt it in a scarf, and laid it together with his body in a coffin previously prepared for the purpose."

Thus in his thirty-fifth year perished Captain Hotham. He was buried in the church of All Hallows, Barking, the entry in the register being as follows :—

1644–5. Jan. 1st. John Hotham Esqir, Beheaded for betraing his trust to ye State.

The next day, Thursday, January 2nd, about midday, Sir John Hotham was conducted to the same scaffold, accompanied by Mr. Hugh Peters, chaplain to Sir Thomas Fairfax, an ecclesiastic whom Clarendon defines "an ungodly professor" and who was destined later to suffer the same death for which he was now to prepare Sir John.[1] It is said, however, that even that morning the friends of Sir John had once more adopted the measure which had before proved successful, and had found means to send up a petition to Parliament hoping to occasion a debate.[2] Therefore Hotham, even upon the scaffold, expected the good news of his pardon to arrive. So often, indeed, had he anticipated death, and so often had the bitter cup been dashed from his lips at the last moment, that he may well have trusted that fortune would intervene again on his behalf. Four times, as we have seen, had the date fixed for his execution been deferred, once before he had been brought to the block only to be reprieved, and, still more, a general impression now prevailed that the penalty of the law having been paid by one member of the family, the vengeance of the Parliament would be stayed. Thus it is said the

[1] Mr. Peters was much employed by Fairfax, not only in religious matters but also to report the details of his campaign. Being excepted at the general amnesty granted at the Restoration, he was tried for plotting with Cromwell to bring about the death of Charles I, condemned, and executed in September, 1666.

[2] There is no record of any such motion or debate in the *Journals* of the House ; but as this is stated respectively by Whitelocke, Tickell, and also by George Hadley in his *History of Kingston-on-Hull*, ed. 1788, page 187, it appears probable that some attempt was made by Sir John's friends to formulate such a petition, and that to the last the condemned man hoped that it would be attended by success.

execution was postponed till two o'clock in the afternoon, while the condemned man waited vainly for the expected pardon to arrive. If this were so, the torture of a lifetime may well have been concentrated into that delay during which he watched for the messenger who never came. Shattered as he evidently was in health from the long confinement and continued anxiety which he had undergone, the suspense was doubly cruel. Clarendon speaks of him as being "broken by despair," and another account relates that he "seemed very much daunted and his spirits somewhat fainty"; but, though all writers concur that he exhibited far more patience on the scaffold than did his son, yet in the prolonged uncertainty with regard to his fate and the alternate fluctuations of hope and despondency protracted, according to this account, even till the last moment of his existence, Hotham must have endured the agony of death more than once.

At last, all expectation of mercy abandoned, the doomed man prepared to die.[1] "Sir John many years before his death, or that these troubles began," relates Cholmley, "would often say he would never come upon a scaffold to say '*Good people, take example by me,*' but would die with a pistol in his hand. By which," adds Cholmley piously, "we see that Man proposeth, but it is God that disposeth."[2] Fate had in the end proved too strong for Sir John Hotham, and the imperious Governor, the hardened fighter, had come to meet death in the fashion he had most denounced. Stepping to the rail of the scaffold he addressed the crowd as follows :—

Gentlemen,

I know no more of myself but this, that I deserve this death from Almighty God, nay, that I deserve damnation and the severest punishment from him. But, as for the business of Hull, the betraying of it from the Parliament, the ministers have all been with me, and given me good counsel, neither was I in any ways guilty of it; that is all I can say to that act.

[1] In the manuscript History of the Hotham family, by Arthur Collins, it is stated: "One account says the execution of Sir John was deferred from nine in the morning till the evening, at which time a Messenger appearing hastily upon the hill, the Multitude cried out 'A Pardon,' but the man coming to the scaffold pronounced the order of the Commons that the execution should go on."

[2] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 185.

For other offences, as rash words, anger, and such things, no man has been more guilty ; I beseech God to forgive me. I have received as many favours as any man from God, and I have been as ungrateful as any man could be ; but God Almighty I hope, has forgiven me my sins, and I desire you all to pray to God for me, that I may be forgiven. I hope God Almighty will forgive me, the Parliament, the Court Martial, and all men that have anything to do with my death. And gentlemen ! look ye to it all, as I am a warning to you, I have received many mercies from God, and have been unfruitful, ungrateful to him under them and God Almighty has let me see that, though for this offence whereof I am accused he has not done it, yet he has brought this affliction upon me to save my soul, by and through the merits of Jesus Christ ; for alas ! this affliction is nothing to all my sins. God Almighty kept me from my trial at St. Albans, and other places, to bring me to this place, which I hope I shall glorify God in, and his blessed name be for ever glorified.[1]

It was the custom to question condemned men ere their execution and to endeavour to extract from them some acknowledgment of the justice of their sentence for the satisfaction of their judges and the edification of the spectators—a practice which often cruelly harassed their last moments. Broken as he was in health and spirits, Sir John refused to undergo such an ordeal,[2] nevertheless there was something further that Mr. Peters informed the audience he was desired "to commend unto them" from the prisoner, which was this :—

That he had lived in abundance of plenty, his estate large, about £2,000 a year at first, and that he had gained much to it. That in the beginning of his days he was a soldier in the Low Countries and was at the battle of Prague. That at his first going out for a soldier, his father spake to him to this effect, "Son, when the Crown of England lies at stake, you will have fighting enough." That he had run through many dangers, great hazards and undertakings, and now came to this end ;

[1] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 185.

[2] Mr. Peters told the people that it was the desire of Sir John Hotham that since he had in his chamber fully discovered his mind to him and other ministers, many questions might not be put to him, but that he might have liberty to speak only what he thought fit concerning himself (Tickell page 476).

and desired they would take notice in him of the vanity of all things here below, as wit, parts, prowess, strength, friends, honour, or whatever else is merely of a terrestrial nature.[1]

There is something singularly pathetic in this last address to the people which Hotham evidently could not trust himself to utter. It is apparent that, in that moment of death, the thought was vividly present to him of all which he was leaving, the " abundance of plenty " which he had enjoyed, his large estates to which he had added much by valour of arms and force of ability ; the power, the honour, the friendship which had been his ; the success which had so long attended him amid the " great hazards and undertakings " of his strenuous, eventful life. And in this dread hour, the futility of it all, " to wit, parts, prowess, friends, honour," now " come to this end "—the headsman's block, a dishonoured grave, the execration of those who had fawned upon him. And throughout it all he seemed to recall yet more clearly the scene of long ago when a peaceful Elizabethan squire, looking at the hot-blooded youth before him, had spoken a warning which had since become endowed with sinister import. . . . Truly Hotham had had " fighting enough " and for him the end was come. The crown of England still lay at stake, great issues still hung in the balance, but for good or for evil, for honour or dishonour, he would nevermore waver between the forces engaged in this gigantic struggle. . . . The priest knelt down to pray, and as the words of his solemn petition died into silence, Sir John took up the refrain and prayed on his own behalf. Then together they sang the 38th Psalm, and once again Sir John knelt in prayer, so continuing for the space of a quarter of an hour. Then he laid his head upon the block, and the executioner at one blow severed it from the body. It was first tied up in a linen scarf, which is said to be still in the possession of Lord Hotham, and was afterwards placed in the coffin with his body, which was buried in the church of All Hallows, Barking, that same evening, the entry in the register being as follows :—

1644–5. Jan 2. Sr John Hotham, Knight, Beheaded for betraing his trust to the parl[t].

[1] Tickell, page 476.

So perished Sir John Hotham at the age of fifty-six; and the grief of his stricken family was further accentuated by another tragic bereavement which marked for them that ill-omened year. For on June 17th, 1645, at All Hallows, Barking, was likewise buried Dorothy Hotham, the Governor's little daughter[1] who, so a pathetic entry records, died of a broken heart for sorrow at the sad fate of her father and brother.

Subsequently Cholmley, moralising over the end of that father and son, concludes that "the son was more tampering and engaged in the treaty with Lord Newcastle," while "surely the Father had more real affection to the King's cause and peace of the Kingdom," and he states the conviction that had the son not influenced his father to the contrary, the latter would have frankly declared for the King. After which he adds the information that "Sir John Hotham was the first man who moved in the House of Commons that the Archbishop of Canterbury might be charged with High Treason, and yet the person that suffered immediately before him upon the same stage."[2]

Meanwhile the reflection is curious that, had there been no Civil War, the name of Sir John Hotham would have come down to us as that of a gallant soldier, an exemplary country gentleman, a praiseworthy and energetic member of Parliament, and a leader of distinguished ability in the affairs of his country. But his misfortunes, as Tickell points out, "were chiefly owing to his inconstancy and want of resolution" in a great crisis with which, of his very temperament, he was unfitted to cope.

In conclusion, into the Nemesis which had overtaken him, the two factions between whom he had so long wavered each read a moral in harmony with their respective convictions. The Royalists exulted in the fulfilment of "the dreadful imprecation" which Hotham had uttered upon the walls of Hull when he had refused admission to his Sovereign, "*That God would bring confusion upon him and his if he were not a*

[1] His third daughter by his last wife, *née* Sara Anlaby. As the marriage only took place in 1635, Dorothy must have been a young child at the date of her death.

[2] *Clarendon State Papers*, Vol. II, page 185. Archbishop Laud was beheaded eight days later than Sir John Hotham, on January 10th.

loyal and faithful subject to his Majesty." Charles also sententiously proclaimed how in the death of Hotham was illustrated the fact that the "rude carriage of a subject towards his Sovereign carries always its own vengeance as an inseparable shadow to it." The Roundheads, on the other hand, with more apparent logic, pointed out that, so long as Hotham had remained faithful to the cause of the Commonwealth, no man had enjoyed greater honour and prosperity than he; but that, from the moment when he sought to make his peace with the King nothing prospered with him, till his adverse fortunes culminated in the final catastrophe.

One wonders whether, when Charles himself stood upon the scaffold, he discovered that an "act of divine justice" can as well visit the shortcomings of a Sovereign towards his subjects, as those of a subject towards his Sovereign; and whether at last he was better able to comprehend that which in truth appears to have led to the undoing of Sir John Hotham—a fatal capacity for appreciating both sides of a controversy.

CHAPTER V

THE "REVOLUTION SIR JOHN" AND HIS SON

ON the arrest of the Governor of Hull, his property had been sequestrated; but shortly after his demise it was restored to his successors, when the representation of the family descended to John, the eldest son of Captain Hotham. Born in March, 1632, this second baronet was under thirteen years of age at the date of the execution of his father and grandfather; and his boyhood was subsequently spent very quietly at Scorborough with his mother, while his uncle Durand aided in the administration of his estate. Owing to his youth he took no part in the struggle which continued between the adherents of the Monarchy and the supporters of the Commonwealth; but in 1649 Charles I was beheaded, and in 1651 the Civil War came to an end with the defeat of Charles II at the Battle of Worcester.

Before that date, however, this young Hotham had in one respect emulated the example of his immediate predecessors in that he married when only eighteen years of age. In 1650 he became the husband of Elizabeth, only daughter of Sapcote, second Viscount Beaumont of Swords in Ireland, a lady who later, in order to distinguish her from others who then also bore her married name, was known to her husband's family as "the Lady Beaumont Hotham."

The portraits of the young couple, both of unusual interest, were taken four years after their union, when John Hotham was still only twenty-two years of age. Singularly childish and innocent they look—mere boy and girl, yet there is strength as well as individuality in both faces. The silken locks which frame the pleasing countenance of John Hotham fall back from a forehead full of intellect; there is a guileless-

SIR JOHN HOTHAM, THE 2ND BARONET
"THE REVOLUTION SIR JOHN"
Painted in 1654

LADY HOTHAM
WIFE OF SIR JOHN HOTHAM, THE 2ND BARONET
Painted in 1654

ness in his expression which proclaims him worthy of trust yet no weakling; his mouth is firm; his glance is direct and sincere. In the soft round face of his sedate little bride, the demureness of the Puritan seems to belie the lurking mischief in the eyes, the suppressed smile of her pretty, pouting mouth. Her dress, in its stiff outline, bespeaks the severity of the Protectorate; her hair is brushed back relentlessly from a brow whence are banished too the quaint curls affected by the ladies of Charles's reign; yet the ringlets massed behind her ears convey a subtle suggestion of coquetry, and her expression, if staid, is kindly and wondrous wise. A clever little lady was she, with a business capacity of which her husband was well aware, since, during his enforced absence from home, he left in her capable hands the management of his estate. Indeed, one fault only appears to have been hers—a fault which he could readily forgive since it arose out of affection for himself—this was an unreasoning jealousy which sometimes disturbed her wonted placidity when duty withheld him too long from her side. In later life, when they had been married thirty-four years, we find him writing earnestly to her on this subject.

20th September 1684.

MY DEARE WIFE,

I am very sorry that you and I should at home live soe extreamly sattisfied, and assunder under such unreasonable jealousie, but I will consider your part on't as proceeding from an excess of affection, since I doe owne you an extraordinary person in all my reall concernings, and I pray you therefore beleeve in this business directly, (which in due time you shall know) which diverts me from Scorborough[1] where had I a thousand hearts they would all be for your sake.

Then mentioning that he has had an illness, but has not kept his bed "though for much less many would have done so, and had I followed Doctor Lister's advice so had I"—he adds—

And if I value an illness lesse than another man does the greatest reason of it is that I may better serve you, for if that

[1] Hotham's disinclination to write about his "business" suggests that it was of a secret and political character, and was probably in connection with the succession to the throne.

were not pleasant to me, other desires of living would be most easily dispensed with by your most affectionate and faithful husband.

They were in truth a devoted couple and to the end of his life we find Sir John addressing his wife with an attachment which never diminished. Many causes, however, operated to enforce his unwilling absence from his home. He took a prominent part in the politics of his day, and was a very conscientious member of Parliament. In the House he constantly joined in the debates, and was one of the foremost members who opposed the growing power of the Roman Catholics. Unintimidated by the fate of his father and grandfather, he never hesitated to advocate the cause of Civil and Religious liberty, nor did he flinch from any measure which could further this end; indeed, all his utterances confirm the impression conveyed by his portrait that his ruling characteristic was a profound sincerity and the fearless pursuit of that which he conceived to be right.

At length this attitude resulted in trouble for himself. As will be remembered, in 1660 Charles II regained possession of his father's throne, and eleven years later his subjects were dismayed to learn that his brother and heir-presumptive, James, Duke of York, had become a convert to the Roman Catholic faith. Yet owing to the Duke's naval victory over the Dutch on May 28th, 1672, his popularity did not at first suffer so greatly as might have been expected, and when he visited the Humber that same autumn, he was well received by the neighbouring landowners, including Sir John Hotham, who even presented the Royal visitor with a pair of fat bucks out of his park at Scorborough. None the less, early in 1673 the Test Act was passed, which obliged all persons holding any public office to conform to the worship of the Established Church, and, as a result, the Duke was forced to resign all his commands, including that of the Navy. Later, a Bill was introduced to exempt him from some of the inconveniences attendant upon the Act, but this was strongly opposed by Hotham, who, in 1680, further gave energetic support to the famous Bill of Exclusion, designed to prevent the Duke of York, as a Papist, from eventually succeeding to the throne.

The story runs that immediately after a debate upon this measure in which Sir John had expressed himself very vehemently in favour of it, he was returning home through the Mall in St. James's Park when he encountered the Duke of York. His Royal Highness, indignant at the part which Hotham had taken in endeavouring to deprive him of all chance of the crown which might one day be his, was not in a mood to lose so good an opportunity of speaking his mind. He therefore stopped Hotham and expostulated hotly with the latter upon his conduct, till at last, taking him roughly by the coat, he sternly bade him remember the fate of his father and grandfather.

The warning, if apt, at least gave occasion for a still more apt rejoinder. Sir John replied gravely that he was sorry his conscience should ever force him to oppose any measure in which the interest of His Royal Highness was concerned. "And I am particularly unhappy, Sir," he added, "that you should recall to my memory the fate of my father and my grandfather, *because it is what I never can think of without recollecting at the same time the fate of your father which followed it so soon.*" He then bowed and retired.[1]

Within five years from that date the Duke of York was seated upon the throne of England as James II; and Hotham, recognised as one of his bitterest opponents, at length fled for safety to The Hague. There he attached himself to the Prince of Orange, and by means of correspondence with his friends in Parliament and Yorkshire strove to pave the way for the landing of that Prince in England. Meantime it is said that James, aware of the danger to himself which might accrue from the sojourn abroad of so antagonistic a subject, peremptorily ordered Hotham on his allegiance to return immediately to England. In reply, Sir John sent word that he had not yet finished the "business" which brought him abroad, but that so soon as it was completed he would not fail to return—an answer strictly in accordance with truth. It is alleged that, in consequence, James confiscated the estates of Sir John and gave them to the Papist Lord Langdale, who was likewise made Governor of Hull; but of this forfeiture having actually taken effect there is no evidence, and it must

[1] Related in the manuscript History of the Hotham family.

have been merely in contemplation[1] when Sir John fulfilled the promise imputed to him ; for, the " business " which took him abroad satisfactorily completed, he returned to England in the train of William of Orange, who landed triumphantly at Torbay on November 5th, 1688, and was eagerly welcomed by the populace who had become weary of the tyranny of James II.

During the subsequent march to London with the Prince, Hotham contrived to dispatch a letter to his wife which, after thirty-eight years of wedded life, breathes the tenderness of a lover :—

Abingdon,
Dec. 11th, '88.

MY DEAREST SWEET DOVY,

I rejoyce at the opportunity of sending this by a person who this day came hither to the Prince from my Ld. Danby. I thank God I am pretty well, the country ever since our landing coming into us, and with Prince George abundance of the King's army, and yesterday a battallion of the Ld. Douglass at Reading killed all their popish officers, and came to our protection, and iust now is come newse express that the King, Queen, and Prince of Wales are run into France. I hope ere long to have the joy of being with you.

JO. HOTHAM.

This for my Lady Hotham,
at her house in Scorboro',
neare Beverley in Yorkshire.

But impatient as he must have been to visit his home, there was much to accomplish ere Hotham could return to the wife and family from whom he had been separated for two years. Macaulay asserts that after landing with the Prince of Orange he was seized and for a space committed to the Gate-house, Westminster ; but if so, he was soon set at liberty. For mean-

[1] Had the Hotham estates been actually forfeited by James II, and restored by William of Orange as stated in the manuscript History by the Rev. the Hon. Frederick Hotham, it appears probable that some mention of the transactions would appear in the Patent Rolls or State Papers, which is not the case. In the MS. History by Arthur Collins, on the contrary, it is expressly stated as follows : " His (Sir John's) estates were thereupon surveyed and a grant of them ordered to be made out in favour of Lord Langdale, of Holme, in Yorkshire, a Baron of the Roman persuasion. *Before the grant was completed the Revolution took place.*"

time William had without difficulty possessed himself of the throne which James had hurriedly vacated, and no sooner was this Prince's sovereignty assured than he gratefully requested Hotham to state what reward he preferred for "his eminent and meritorious services." Sir John, we are told, thereupon "requested to be made a Bishop (being a very learned man), or a General of Horse"—it might have been added being a very valiant man. And given this curious alternative, His Majesty conceived Hotham's "courage, military talents and high spirit better suited to the latter position, and therefore after restoring his estates [*sic*] promoted him to the rank of General, gave him a Regiment of Horse, and appointed him Governor of Hull, January 2nd, 1689."[1]

This last act was a peculiarly graceful one, taking into consideration the circumstances under which the position of Governor had been held and lost by the immediate forbear of the man upon whom it was now bestowed; nevertheless there seemed in the possession of this post something sinister to the family of Hotham, and very brief was destined to be Sir John's tenure of it.

The month of January passed without his being able to return to Yorkshire; and it does not appear that in the interval Lady Hotham attempted to travel to London. The journey in those days was not to be lightly undertaken, and daily she must have been expecting to receive the glad tidings of her husband having at length set out for his home. It, however, behoved him to remain in London till the proclamation of the new King and Queen on February 13th; but once that was over, as the coronation was not to take place till April, he conceived there would be ample time for him to visit Scorborough and, if necessary, return thence in readiness for the second ceremony. Meanwhile the preliminary function, the proclamation, was, by a strange arrangement, planned to take place on Ash Wednesday, a day better suited to penitence and humiliation than to the appropriation of a crown snatched from the head of a living king; and when the date arrived the weather was more in keeping with the accepted character of the day than with the innovation which turned it into a

[1] Manuscript History of the Hotham family

festivity. The cold was intense, and the rain descended in sheets; but it failed to damp the satisfaction of the new Sovereigns or the ardour of their followers. At noon William and Mary, in robes of state, but without the diadems which were reserved for the greater function of their coronation, proceeded from the palace of Whitehall to the banqueting house. There they received a deputation from the Convention Parliament inviting them to take possession of the vacant throne; then they signed the Declaration of Rights, after which they were proclaimed as William III and Mary II, King and Queen of England.

Immediately after the ceremony Hotham set out for Yorkshire. It is easy to imagine the delight with which he at last travelled towards his home and the devoted wife from whom he had been so long separated, while the conditions under which he was returning thither were calculated to increase that happiness. He knew his estates were now immune from the forfeiture with which he must have been well aware they had been threatened; he was high in the favour of the new Sovereign, who only desired to lavish honours on an adherent who had materially assisted in placing him upon the throne; finally—and with a man of Hotham's character this must have weighed more than all beside—he had accomplished the great aim of his existence. During the years which were past, at the recognised risk of both life and fortune, "he had never swerved a hair's breadth from the two great principles for which he fought—the Protestant Succession and the dignity and privilege of Parliament"—till now at last that end was accomplished; the Protestant religion was restored throughout the land, papists were for ever excluded from the throne, and the Constitutional Government of England was established on a firm basis. Consistent, fearless and honourable as had been Hotham's conduct throughout the time of struggle, the part which he had played in bringing this result to pass was recognised and appreciated by his contemporaries, with whom his popularity was evidently great. Before he reached Hull, the town of which he was now Governor, he found that the whole countryside had turned out to do him honour. It was unfortunately a day which rivalled in inclemency the dismal weather that had prevailed on the occa ion of the

recent proclamation; the cold was extreme, and heavy rain descended ceaselessly. But notwithstanding such conditions crowds waited to greet him and, drenched as they were, insisted upon accompanying him for miles upon his way.

The gentlemen of Yorkshire (relates the manuscript History) with above ten thousand of the populace, received him joyfully with all the honours due to his illustrious character and, meeting him in procession, welcomed his return in safety and triumph to his native County, attending him to Beverley (the borough he had chosen to represent in Parliament) on his way to his seat at Scorborough, with acclamations and applause. This was no doubt the proudest day Sir John had ever seen; the object of his life was accomplished, the liberty of his country was now secured, and nothing but prosperity and happiness appeared before him.

One wonders if, during that triumphant progress from Hull to Beverley, the thoughts of Hotham flew to that other procession which had once passed along the same route, when that other Governor, his grandfather, had been led a captive away from the home towards which he, personally, was now so joyfully hastening. Already a doomed man, that former Sir John had passed along that road amid the sullen looks and execrations of those who had been his comrades; yet his descendant, now traversing it under such different conditions —amid the applause and affection of those who escorted him —was, little as he dreamed it, a man similarly going to his doom. An instinct of courtesy, it is asserted, cost him his life. While the friends who accompanied him were unmindful of the rain and tempest, it seemed to Sir John an ungracious attitude on his part to show them no deference in return. Wherefore "though the day was wet and cold," continues the manuscript History, "this excellent man, regardless of himself, and anxiously solicitous to show his gratitude and respect to the gentlemen who accompanied him, met them bareheaded; and notwithstanding their solicitations, rode with them the whole way to Beverley (which he did not enter until evening) thus uncovered." The result was what might have been expected. To a man no longer young, and probably in a condition of great fatigue, the many hours' exposure to cold and rain brought on a severe chill, he returned to Scor-

borough seriously ill, and, although he lingered for some weeks, all the efforts of his physicians failed to save him, and he finally expired on April 6th, 1689.

His death at such a moment was singularly pathetic ; and this cruel loss occurring so soon after a reunion when all seemed to promise uninterrupted happiness for herself and her husband must have added to the poignancy of Lady Hotham's grief. In the splendid monument which was later raised to his memory in the church at Dalton where he was buried, there is perhaps typified something of the irony of such a close to his career. On a slab of black marble the dead man is seen clad in full armour. His bier is borne on the shoulders of four life-size female figures in white marble, representing the four cardinal virtues of which he had been such a bright exponent—Truth, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. But beneath, on a mat of white marble resting upon a base of black, is shown all that death had left of so much bravery and worth—the grim skeleton, silent witness to the vanity of earthly pomp and might.

> The Knight's bones are dust,
> And his good sword rust ;—
> His soul is with the saints, I trust.

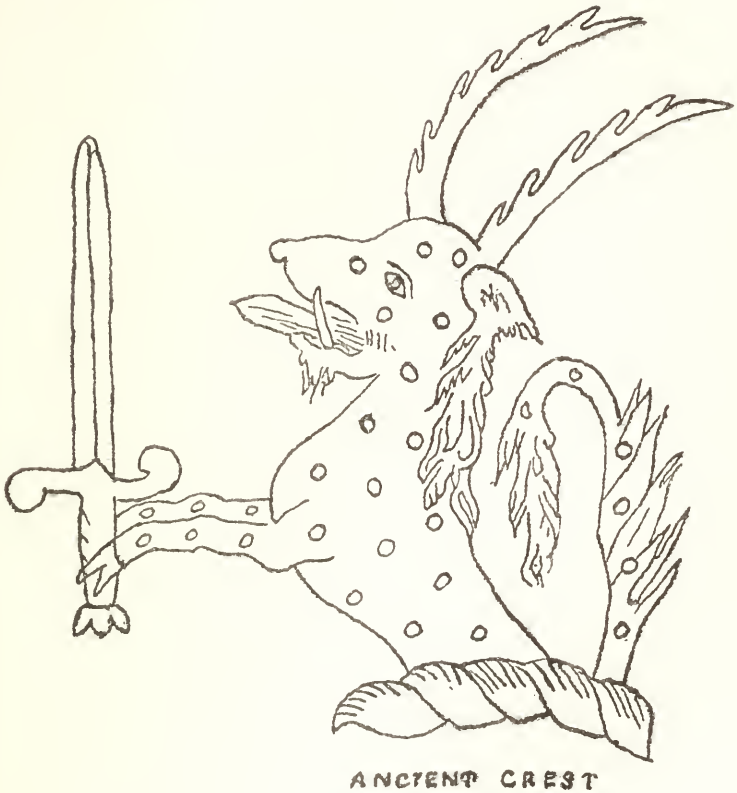
Owing to the part which the dead man had taken in the transference of the crown from James to William, he was subsequently remembered in his family by the name of " the Revolution Sir John " ; and a picturesque legend which arose in this connection should perhaps be referred to here.

The crest borne by earlier generations of Hothams was described by the Garter King of Arms in the days of Queen Elizabeth as " a demi-antelope, proper, holding in its forelegs a sword hilted or." For some unexplained reason, about the middle of the seventeenth century the character of this device was changed to that of a demi-seaman, advancing through the ocean in menacing guise, " holding in his dexter hand a flaming sword argent ; hilt and pomel or ; and on his sinister arm carying a shield bearing the arms of Hotham." This design is all the more curious in that there is no record at that period of any member of the family being connected with

THE TOMB OF "THE REVOLUTION SIR JOHN"

naval matters,[1] and the reason of the change is thus proffered by family tradition :—

We shall find this [crest] strikingly emblematical of the fortunes of the Revolution Sir John. He was himself the warrior crossing the sea from Holland, yet not triumphantly,



1592. From a Drawing in the MS. History.

but naked, i.e. stripped or despoiled of his estates. Still on his shield he bore the arms of his inheritance asserting his hereditary right and legal claim to it, and bearing in his right hand "a flaming sword," the emblem of the zeal with which he

[1] It is unnecessary to point out how singularly appropriate this ocean-warrior is to the distinguished naval record of the family during the last two centuries.

would defend the Protestant Religion, and the determined resolution with which he would assert his rights.

The motto *Certum pete finem* refers to the Crest and to the vicissitudes of fortune in the heads of the family, who had three times within half a century been the victims of arbitrary power, Republican and Monarchical. It bespeaks the determination of the naked warrior, Sir John Hotham, to seek a firm and final settlement of the laws and constitution of the

1665 AND AFTERWARDS. FROM A DRAWING IN THE MS. HISTORY.

Country, by which these illegal and arbitrary acts should be for ever prevented, and the Civil and Religious rights, and the properties of the subject, be permanently secured from the oppression of the Commons and the Crown.[1]

Although this is a fairy-tale, in that the crest has been discovered to have been in use before the days of "the

[1] Manuscript History of the Hotham Family.

Revolution Sir John,"[1] the curious fashion in which it serves to illustrate both his fortunes and his aims at the date of his return from Holland is certainly remarkable, all the more that this rendering was read into it by those of his successors who formed likewise a very just estimate of his character and his worth. It is to be regretted, however, that such a man did not leave behind him an heir more after his own pattern than the son who succeeded him ; but intellect and merit are often inherited collaterally, and so it was to prove in this instance.

Out of her family of seven children, Lady Hotham, the widow of " the Revolution Sir John," had seen five predecease their father. At the date of his death there only survived her eldest son John, who had been born in 1655, and a daughter Bridget, who had married a Yorkshire neighbour, Godfrey Bosville, Esq., of Gunthwaite. Moreover, this son, who now became the third baronet, had, at the age of twenty-three, contracted a marriage which, although satisfactory from a worldly point of view, had not met with the approval of his parents. His wife, Catherine, the only child and heiress of John Heron, Esq., of Beverley, appears in the first instance to have been thought all too mercenary in her demands with regard to her jointure, and, if one may judge by the entertaining but sarcastic letters indited by Lady Hotham to her prospective daughter-in-law on that account, there was, from their first acquaintance, little love lost between these two ladies. The marriage subsequently seems to have alienated young Hotham from his parents ; and there are grounds for believing that their disapproval was justified in that, later in life, he appears to have been living apart from his wife. Meanwhile it is noticeable that his father never mentioned him in any letters to his mother, and that on the death of the elder Sir John he bequeathed to this his only surviving son the meagre legacy of twenty guineas.

Indeed, something of mystery seems to surround the fate of this young Hotham who now for a brief period enjoyed the family honours. His portrait, despite the richness of the

[1] Dugdale, the Herald, mentions it so early as 1665, and he may have been instrumental in its adoption, according to the opinion of Colonel Saltmarshe.

dress in which he is depicted, is devoid of the attraction so conspicuous in the pictures of his predecessors. His expression is not unpleasing, but the lower part of his face appears to be developed out of harmony with the rest, and in some indefinable manner the whole conveys the impression of a man not in a normal state of health.

Such seems to have been the case. Two years after his father's death, in the spring or summer of 1691, young Sir John went abroad, probably in search of renewed strength, and took up his abode in Holland. Owing to the long residence of his father at the Court of the Prince of Orange, there must have been many ready to welcome any member of his family, and this may have presented a consideration to the lonely young man who was unaccompanied by his wife. In the August following his arrival, however, he went, at the invitation of a friend, Mr. Goulding, to stay with the latter in Amsterdam; and the sad termination of that visit is best related in the letter which his host, three days later, dispatched to Scorborough:—

In Amsterdam 1691 $\frac{28}{18}$ August.

Honored Maddam

I am sorry of this sad occation of writing to give yo^{r} Ladyship an Accoumpt of the Suddaine death of S^{r} John Hotham the particulars whereof please to take as followeth—

about a fortnight since I went to see him in ye Country, where he was, and stayed as long as I could with him, wch he tooke kindly from mee, & carryed him a Letter [illegible] & wch all desired him y^{t} when hee came to Amsterdam againe, hee would accept of an English Bedd: & an English dish of Meate wth mee and [not] lye in a publick house, for wch hee thanked me & tould [me] hee would accept of my proffer, and accordingly on Monday Seven: night in ye afternoone Came & stayed till Satturday morning and hardly went out further than ye doore but spent most of ye time in reading & was very much pleased wth being here wth us, Insoemuch he desired mee & my wife hee might be [here] all this winter (coming), & he would take it kindly & give for his being with mee what I pleased, I tould him hee should be soe heartily wellcome & give what hee pleased, . . . att all which hee was very exceeding glad, & said hee would send over for some Ale from his owne house, & some haunches of Venison powdered up: & some

SIR JOHN HOTHAM, THE 3RD BARONET
OB. 1691

golden pippins, and some other frute, and threatned how merrily he would spend ye ensuing winter amongst us at Amsterdam.

And on Saturday morning he rose to goe away, drest himself & went to ye door, & satt talking wth my wife till I drest mee to waite on him, whereatt said hee I am not very well, I have a mynd to lye down a whyle and stay for ye afternoone boate, and bad y^t^ if he should over sleep himselfe wee should call him for hee found himselfe inclinable thereto : & accordingly my wife went in, withdrew ye curtains a little way back, saw him lying on his back with his mouth and eyes oppen & looked very paile. Shee came running to mee & tould mee Sr John lay asleep in a very strainge posture. Soe I went wth her & call^d^ severall tymes Sr John ! Sr John ! & hee not speaking I drew back the Curtains and found him starke dead, & Could ; and had not tumbled nor stirred from ye (place) where he first lay downe that I suppose he might goe away in his sleepe : for my wife & maid was all ye whyle in a room under, fhat if hee had made ye least noyse would have heard him, tor a whyle after hee was layd downe they heard him snore down into ye room.

Soe [I] immediately called in naboures & sent for some English merch^ts^, then tooke all things out of his pocketts, putt all things into a bag, and sealed them up before them : then went to ye house where he had used to lodge in towne where hee had tould hee had a small box : which sealed up allsoe ye next morning, Alderman Wilkinson's sone going along w^th^ mee I went into ye country : & sealed up all that was there.

As for his Corpes I had all Intrills taken out, putt in a small Childe's Coffin & bury'd in a Church, ye body imbalmed & putt in lead & laid in an extraordinary strong coffin made as handsome as I could direct here, being covered wth black bayes wth dives hinges on itt and on the Lidd : insett in white nails H obiit $\frac{25}{15}$ Aug : ano 1691 aetat : Suae : 37 : and soe shall continue till yo^r^ Lady^Spp's^ further order for ye disposing of itt, whether you will please to have itt sent for England or interr^d^ here : & more I dare not doe without itt or of those mostly concerned.

I had three Surgions att ye opening of ye Corpse which was done in ye first night after death, and according as I desired, they were very circumspect in inspecting & finding out any imperfections that might cause so suddaine a death, and I stood

bye all the whyle, my Selfe, the particulars of which I shall give yr LadySp : an Exact accompt off if you desire itt.

I desire yr LadyShp I may have yr Comands as soone as possible in all pticulars, and they shall be readily obeyed, by Maddam

Yr LadyShipps, most Humble & obedient Servt

Jos. Goulding.

The Corps is tomorrow Night to be carryed into a Church and sett in a place which wee gott made on purpose, where it may be seen att any tyme if any desire itt, for ye Corps & Coffins are soe ordered : yt ye face may be seen without any offence if it be for as many years as you please, for, as I would have as little expence as possible with Reputation, soe I would not have ye honour of his family lessoned for a small matter, it being so well known here. I would have kept his death secrett if I could till I had sent to your LadySp : but t'was impossible, when it was soe soon English merch^ts here knewe of itt & to be sure would write it over this post, Soe I have sent a Letter to Congratulate S^r Charles this post.

"*Le Roi est mort ; vive le Roi !*" By the same post that conveyed the letter which is all that records the life and death of this ill-fated young man, there travelled the congratulations which bade glad welcome to his successor. Solitary in the grave as during existence, the son of "the Revolution Sir John" was finally buried far from his kindred in a small village called Beverwyke, near The Hague, since his body having been put into a lead coffin the magistrates of the country would not permit this to be deposited near any populous town. Thus, a somewhat mysterious and pathetic figure, he passes out of sight amid the sordid details of his interment ; while at his demise without issue, the senior branch of the family terminated that direct succession from father to son or to grandson which had been continued throughout six hundred years. Although the male descent was then uninterruptedly preserved, and is to this day, yet, as has already been pointed out, through the generations which followed the succession, in contrast to that remarkable record of its earlier history, was destined to pass but rarely from parent to child.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROMANCE OF SIR CHARLES HOTHAM

IN what manner Elizabeth, Lady Hotham, far away in Yorkshire, bore the tidings of the death of her only surviving son history does not reveal. The younger Lady Hotham, his widow, ere long married again, and subsequently becoming the mother of a numerous family, probably expended but scanty regret on the untimely fate of her first husband. Indeed, the decease of the luckless third baronet would appear to have been of small moment to those he left behind but for a strange situation which arose consequent upon his dying without issue.

It must first be explained that "the Revolution Sir John" had purchased from the family of Aislabie in Yorkshire the property of South Dalton[1] which, together with the manor of Hutton Cranswick, not being in the entail, he had left to his wife Elizabeth many years before his decease; but at a later date, when it had become apparent that no heir would ever be born to her son, the latter, no doubt for a handsome consideration, had made over his reversion in all the family estates to his father and mother by indenture dated April 12th, 1687. "The effect of this agreement," we are told, "was that if young Hotham had no children, the entailed estates would at his death pass back to his father and mother, or to the survivor of them, or to the assigns of the latter. The conveyance, therefore, together with Sir John's will, placed at his death the immediate possession of South Dalton and Hutton

[1] "King Osred for his love of St. John of Beverley gave to that Church the Manor and lands of South Dalton where the Abbot of Beverley had a pleasant country seat. This upon the dissolution of the Monasteries at the Reformation became private property," and was eventually purchased by Sir John Hotham, the 2nd Baronet, as described. (See MS. History of the Hotham Family, by Arthur Collins.)

Cranswick in the hands of his widow, together with the absolute remainder of the rest of the property should the son die without issue."[1]

This had now occurred, and Elizabeth, Lady Hotham, or, as she was more generally called, "the Lady Beaumont Hotham," was in possession of the entire estates to dispose of as she pleased. The consternation of her husband's family at this discovery may be imagined. Since the next heir had little claim upon her consideration, it appeared likely that she would follow the dictates of inclination rather than of honour, and would bequeath the property either in the female line, or to her own kindred, in preference to any male representative of the House of Hotham.

It seemed too probable (points out the manuscript History) that the estate would pass for ever from the (Hotham) family, and be attached to the possessions of the House of Beaumont. An ancient and honourable race seemed on the point of sinking into obscurity, bereaved of all its possessions and stript of all its weight and consequence. But from this cruel state the generous feelings, the dignified and excellent sentiments, and noble, disinterested conduct of this Lady saved it, leaving a debt of gratitude which her descendants have been eager to repay her much beloved—and I had almost said—her sacred Memory.

Not without reason had "the Revolution Sir John" proclaimed his wife to be "an extraordinary person in all my real concernings." Before, however, proceeding to explain the scheme which she forthwith evolved out of her clever brain, it will be necessary to retrace our steps for a space, since we must first glance at the parentage and early life of the man who was now become the head of the Hotham family, Sir Charles Hotham, the fourth baronet.

The Governor of Hull, executed in 1645, had, by his second wife Anne, daughter of Ralph Rokesby, Esq., of York, a son Charles, more generally known as the Rector of Wigan, since although he owned other benefices, that valuable living in Lancashire was the principal scene of his labours. It has

[1] *History and Chartulary of the Hothams of Scorborough*, by Colonel Saltmarshe, page 184.

already been sufficiently demonstrated that the Hothams as a race were of marked individuality and of militant propensities, in that they were wont to maintain their convictions regardless of consequence; hence in their early history, as we have seen, they seldom passed through existence in that comfortable obscurity enjoyed by men of less ability. Charles Hotham, Rector of Wigan, was no exception to the rule. Although it is said that he retained "his rough Northern country speech," he was a man of profound knowledge, of obvious originality, and of stranger aspirations. Educated at Cambridge, he became a Fellow of Peterhouse, of which his forefather John de Hotham had been a great benefactor; while in 1646 he was made Proctor of the University, being, we are assured, "of very great eminency in learning, strictness in religion, unblamableness in conversation."[1] Yet even as preacher and Proctor he worked upon unusual lines, and in Henry Newcome's *Diary* is the following interesting entry:—

I continued [at Cambridge] now this year, 1647. And it being the year I was senior Sophister, I kept my public Act the first Term; in which Mr. Hotham was our Pretor; and besides some other of his singularities he made the Sophisters to say their positions without a book, and I did position so.

But not only was this learned Divine early singled out by his fellows on account of such peculiarities, yet another eccentricity of his is referred to with reticence and bated breath. "In his youth," we are told, "he studied astrology, and afterwards had a love for Chemistry, and *was a searcher into the secrets of nature.*" In other words, in his early manhood he was a student of the occult and an alchemist, a seeker after the elixir of life and the elusive philosopher's stone, a dabbler, it would seem, in Black Magic, in mysteries which, later, he denounced, holding that they approached more narrowly to the domain of Satan than to that of the Church!

This idiosyncrasy, however, did not bar his way to promotion, and in 1653 he was presented with the living of Wigan. Bishop Bridgman having died in the previous year, the benefice became legally void, and Charles Hotham was

[1] *Dictionary of National Biography.*

probably nominated to it by the trustees who held the patronage under his father's will.[1] He paid his first-fruits there on May 9th, 1653; and three years later we find him bursting into verse out of compliment to one of his parishioners who had written a pamphlet in favour of teetotalism. That same year, 1656, the Rector and poet was married in Wigan parish church to Elizabeth Thompson, daughter of Stephen Thompson, of Humbleton,[2] whose family in later generations was again to be connected with his own. By this union he had two daughters, Charlotta and Mary, who were born respectively in 1659 and 1661.

Previous to these events, however, the Rector of Wigan, despite his addiction to booklore and mysticism, had shown the same proclivity as his ancestors for crossing lances with more material powers.

Only five years after his father's execution, he had attracted a dangerous celebrity by preaching against the Covenant, so that he was officially "forbidden to pursue the subject." Yet the next year he framed and published a petition dealing with abuses at the Universities which was voted "scandalous and against the privilege of Parliament," so that it was resolved "he should be deprived of his fellowship."[3] Still, nothing daunted, he fought his cause with singular vigour, and published and republished a forcible vindication of his first contention. But at the Restoration, matters came to a head and the learned Rector was called upon to "take arms against a sea of troubles."

In his book *Corporations Vindicated* he had boasted of his support of the Commonwealth and had termed Charles I the "Scots Cæsar." On the Restoration, however, although he

[1] *History of the Church and Manor of Wigan*, by Canon the Hon. Geo. Bridgman. Bishop Bridgman, the father of Sir Orlando Bridgman, was deprived about 1645, but the benefice did not become legally void until his death.

[2] The entry in the parish Register is as follows: "Charles Hotham rector of this parish of Wigan in Lancashire, and Elizabeth Thompson, spinster, daughter of Stephen Thompson of Humbleton, in Holdernesse in the county of Yorke, Esquire, were published in the parish church of Wigan three severall Lords dayes, to witt upon the 24th of August, and upon the 31st of August, and allso upon the 7th of Septr 1756, according to Act of Parlt (and) were married before Duran Hotham Justice of the Peace the 15th of Sept 1656." The present representative of the Thompson family is Lord Knaresborough.

[3] *Dictionary of National Biography.*

was pronounced unorthodox, consequent upon his refusal to conform, and measures were taken to eject him from his living, he appears to have found a kindly supporter in Charles II. Forthwith a storm of controversy raged over Wigan, since there were at that time actually two incumbents nominated to the parish, who each maintained his sole right to the disputed benefice.

A certain John Burton had been appointed in the room of Hotham, pronounced unorthodox, and great was the annoyance of this substitute when he discovered that Hotham refused to quit. On October 27th the aggrieved John Burton, writing from Clowne, in Derbyshire, to Charles Wittaker (care of Mr. Secretary Wittaker, Whitehall), sends a "large packet" in which he breathes forth his soul in wrath against the pertinacious Hotham. "*Wiggan, my last hopes when I was with you,*" he complains pathetically, "*signifies just nothing,* Mr. Hotham's Trustees resolving either to keepe him in it *maugre his booke,* or else to present one whom he shall nominate and capitulate with"; and on November 13th following Burton writes yet more indignantly :—

I thought I then had by his Matᵗᵉˢ grant Wiggan in Lancashire, and out of yᵗ I was kept by Mr. Hotham ye Intrudʳ who pretended title to ye Patronage and I hear yᵗ since he hath made friends to ye King (and especially Sr Orlando Bridgman and Sir Marmaduke Langdale who married his Aunt) and hath p'cured a Revocation of my Presentacon and a Confirmation of himself at Wiggan.

Hotham "ye Intruder" had in truth enlisted Charles on his side,[1] and for two years he continued to hold out man-

[1] Charles R.

Our will and pleasure is that you forthwith prepare a Bill for Our Royal Signature and in the usual form containing a presentacon of Charles Hotham Clerk and Master of Arts to the Rectory of Wigan in the County Palaton of Lancashire, void by the death of the last Incumbant, whether it belong to our gift *pleno jure* by lapse otherwise. And likewise that you insert a clause in the said presentacon to revoke and annull our former grant or grants of the said Rectory made unto John Burton or any other person whatsoever And for so long doing this shall be your Warrant. Given at the Court at Whitehall the 29th day of September 1660 in the twelfth year of our Regne.

By his Maᵗᵉˢ Comand.
WITT. MORICE.

To the Clerk of our
Signet attending.

fully against the pretensions of his enemies ; but at last fate was too strong for him, the patronage of the Rectory passed finally into the hands of Sir Orlando Bridgman, and Hotham was forced to retire defeated. He thereupon went out to the West Indies accompanied by his wife and infant daughters, and became a minister in the Bermudas upon a nominal salary of forty pounds a year—a more considerable sum then, it is true, than it would represent to-day, but that fact is immaterial since, judging by an entry in the Rector's will, it never appears to have been paid !

Nevertheless the exiled Rector did not abandon his fresh undertaking, and he seems to have made a considerable stir in the Summer Isles by the eloquence and power of his preaching. Apparently the year after his arrival there, in 1663, there was born to him a son who was likewise given the name of Charles, and who, thriving amidst his strange surroundings, waxed fair of face and stout of limb. Moreover, despite the impoverished finances of the banished family, they do not seem to have eschewed creature comforts, if one may judge by an ample book of cookery recipes tenderly cherished by Mrs. Hotham through all her vicissitudes of fortune,[1] which seems to indicate that, in the unforeseen circumstances in which she now found herself, she remained an exemplary housewife. Even in view of the more serious matters of history which we are recording, it is worth pausing to peep between the musty pages of this quaint old parchment-covered volume which, despite the passing of centuries, seems to bring very near to us the life of that exiled Rector and his family of long ago.

For various are the toothsome delicacies recorded therein in a neat upright hand and with spelling remarkable for its ingenuity. We see precisely how Mrs. Thompson concocted "ielle (jelly) of seaurall coulers," and also "ielle as white as snowe," we read of luscious "aprecoke tartes, pickel mushoromes, scosh colopes, french peascodes, froth possetts, drie neats's tungs, minished pies of a hiar," and, with a passing

[1] On the title page this book is inscribed "Mary Thompson, Hir Booke of Reaceats," and it obviously belonged to Mrs. Hotham's mother, Mary Thompson, since much of the writing is of the early seventeenth century, though later are additions in a different hand, presumably that of Mrs. Hotham herself.

shock, " how to stew dukes a good way—take yr dukes and halfe roast them, put 2 or 3 whole onyons in ye belly, a bundel of sweat earbes and a letel salt," etc. We are moreover informed " the beast [*sic*] way " to do all these things and—in pointed contradistinction—" *how to do them my mother's way.*" We are instructed, too, in " *the vertues of earbes in ther seasons,*" viz.—

From ye Annunciation of o^{r} lady till midsummer ye leaues and floures are in season ; from midsumer till miekelmos ye crops and leaues are in virtue ; from St Andrews till the Annuntiation of our laydy [*sic*] the routes are in virtue.

We read, moreover, of various sweet perfumes, pomatums, and requisites for the toilette, how to make " rare swet pouder for ye haire," and a valuable wash for " rufenes on ye fase," obviously of Yorkshire origin since it describes itself as " my Lady Boynton's snaille watter," one essential ingredient being " halfe a peck of snailles " which we are warned should be collected in May or June " for they are fattest." Recipes abound too for precious " Salues " (salves) " Oyntments and Plaisters " ; for such valuable accessories as " Mr. Buckworth's faimous losinges," for " cordiells to provoke sleap," and for countless mysterious medicines to allay still more mysterious diseases, including one which describes itself with curt unattractiveness as " Ye bitter Decoction." And yet other of these simples are so comprehensive in action that they are guaranteed to cure " all malladys," their respective merits being more minutely detailed under the engaging, if ungrammatical, heading—" *the vertues of this wateres.*"

In truth, as one looks at the old book over which so many generations of housewives and mothers must have pored conscientiously, one wonders whether, if Mrs. Hotham exercised her skill alike in preparing delicacies and nostrums for her husband's parishioners in Lancashire and in the far-away Bermudas, the fame of the militant Rector of Wigan may not have owed as much to his wife's pharmacy as to his own learning and eloquence. Be that as it may, while her daughters doubtless profited by the dainty perfumes, the " snaille watter " and the many assistants to beauty of which she was so efficient an exponent, her little son appears to have thriven

on the simples which warded off, or cured, the infantile diseases to which, in common with less healthy humanity, he must have been subject. Did he fall, or otherwise bruise himself, his mother had doubtless ready for him a sweet "Flower of Salues," or salves, not only a sovereign remedy for all ills, but, as she explains, "*itt healeth more in a weak than outhers douse in a month.*" Did he suffer from the infantile ailment of chin-cough (whooping cough) she had recourse to the following curious remedy :—

To cure ye chincough infallible

quilt naturall black wooll on a piece of tiffiny ye bignes of a stomake plaister, strow on yt side which is next ye skin betwict ye tiffany an wooll soume mirrh then sow itt to gether and sett itt in hot coles in a dish to be stept in Brandy and stroak ye brest well wt brandy an lay ye outher warme on and guie ye child inwardly sume oyle of sweat allmonds a spounfull at night at bed time to lousin fleame.

Was he, on the other hand, afflicted, or did she fear that he might be afflicted, with an infantile ailment of a more intricate nature, again his mother was efficiently prepared to ward off the actual or the threatened evil :—

A remedy which expels all maner of worms, even the Solitary Worm is not abell to withstand itt, & in case ther be no worms itt prevents ye haueing any because itt purges away ye humours wch are apt to bread am :

Take disgridium Cream of tartar, diaphoretik minerall, of each halfe a scruple, Rhubarb newly beaten in a mortar halfe a dram, Roat of female ferne pulverised, as much flowers and Leaues of yt tansy that growes in the feilds rubed to a pouder, a littel handfull, Rind of ye Rot of ye mulbary tree gathered before the Mulberrys are ripe one Dram, mix alltogether & *take itt in fatt broth in a morning att the vsuall time of waking, you may ogement or lessen the Dose according to ye Age or temper of the patient yo must drink some broth tow wholl hours after & if after taking this remedy the patient haue a mind to sleep lett am not bee hindered from itt.*

But while Mrs. Hotham was qualified to safeguard her son from so many ills—even from the presence of that worm which sounds so pathetically solitary—she does not seem to

have been so successful in the case of her husband. Possibly —so it would appear from her husband's will—she had remained in England subsequent to a brief visit which he is reported to have paid there in an attempt to adjust his financial affairs. But in 1672 the little home in the Bermudas came to an end owing to the death of the militant Rector who, the year before his decease, indited a testament so curious, and which throws so interesting a light upon his character that it deserves mention.[1] Therein, after disposing of various goods and chattels, he gives instructions to his executors that—

They are first to deduct out of the said moneys forty shillings which I appoint for my funerall charges and fyue poundes for theire owne charges and paines in these my affaires and three pownd due to Mal Strothingham for her wages February Second 71 and three *pownd with one hundredweight of my worst tobacco of three half pence a pownd* or twelve shillings sixpence in lieu thereof to Daniell Readland for his service ending November fyfth 1672 which I hereby giue to my servant Barrington to be bestowed upon him in decent apparrell at his transport to England and twenty shillings for fower of the poorest householders of Pagettes Tribe here. . . .

And after various other kindly legacies of a similar description, the testator bequeaths :—

Forty shillings to buy ringes to remember mee better, and more legacys I would haue given but my present reduct fortune occasioned by the late rigorous lawes and the great charge I leave so slenderly provided for will not permit more nor so much as the vsuall expense of mourning apparrell which would prejudice my children and doe mee noe good at all, only that God may the better bless them I will that tenn pownd be as a small offering to God distributed among the poore any where in such way as shall seeme most meete to my said executors. My wife I suppose will keepe my daughters at home with her or putt them out apprentices to some trade. . . .

But with regard to his "sonn and heire" Charles he gives more minute instructions. The latter, despite the "reduct

[1] Written the 15th February, 1671, and proved the 2nd March, 1673. Durand Hotham, of Winthorpe, and the testator's brother-in-law William Thompson, of Scarborough, were executors. The italics are not in the original.

fortune " of his parent, is to inherit some land in Holderness and the perpetual advowson of the Vicarage Hollum-cum-Withersea there, which is bequeathed—

advising and desiring him that he will diligently prepare and wholly addict himself to the service of God and our blessed Saviour in the Ministry of the Gospell to which service I have as much as in mee lys devoted him as the first fruites of my body from his mother's womb. I would haue him neglect all other studyes save that of Divinity alone and what is most meerely subseruant to that knowledge alone, and especially to gett a thorough understandin of the Holy Scriptures which will make a man wise vnto Salvation and the man of God the Minister of Christ perfect and thoroughly instructed to every good work.

And then the testator proceeds to denounce the studies of his rash youth :—

My astrologicale books as fast as they can be singled out from the rest I would haue as monuments of lying vanity and remnantes of the heathen idolatry burnt that no remnant of them remains in my library my Almagestum novum in folio being a vsefull booke in astronomy a worthy science together with my Huchstades Ephimerittes folio I giue to the publick library in this Island All my chimicall iron tooles which are of about ten pownds value which . . . may with small charge be transported to London I giue to the Doctor Troutbeck [1] if he think them worth his acceptance My gowne and my two cloakes coat and hat and serge suit and vestes and stockings and gloves etc y^{n} to apperteyning I giue to my sonn Charles to be made vse of for his clothing as occasion serues together with my shirtes and all my other both wearing and bedd and table lynnen and one bed with bedd clothes must be reserued for him vnsold to vse in the shipp in his transport for London to my coson Richard Thompson at the Cock in bearebinder lane whom I hereby entreat to receiue him and take care of him till his mother or my executors (having notice by the post) take care for the disposing of him The small stock of bedding and other goodes left with my wife at my departure from London I giue wholy to her.

So Charles Hotham, the only son of the dead Rector, was

[1] Dr. Troutbeck was one of the witnesses of the will.

shipped off to England despite his tender years,[1] endowed somewhat incongruously with the too ample garments of his deceased parent, and with "one bedd and bedd clothes" in which to repose his small person during that transit to the protecting care of his maternal relation "Cosen Richard Thompson" of Bearebinder Lane. Possibly, too, since it returned in safety from the Bermudas there went with him that precious book of recipes, the collected wisdom of the ages, on which he had been so judiciously reared. Thenceforward he was educated in England and in due course entered St. John's College, Cambridge, where he became a Fellow of that House. In accordance with his dead father's injunctions he intended to go into the Church, and was actually admitted to the order of Deacon, but when it became increasingly evident that upon him would devolve the representation of the family honours, it was perhaps deemed more fitting that he should embrace some other profession, and eventually he entered the Army, where he had a distinguished career.

Meantime the passing of years had wrought a wondrous transformation in the once forlorn little lad who had journeyed to England at so early an age. He had developed into a man of striking personality, tall of stature and of splendid physique, handsome alike in face and form, and further remarkable for his fine manners, his bravery, learning and accomplishments. "He possessed great personal advantages," states the manuscript History modestly. "He was a very large man, athletic, of great personal courage, and endured bodily pain with uncommon fortitude when not to be removed by human means"; still more, "he was universally allowed to be one of the most eminently polite classic scholars of that time."

Now that such a fitting representative of the family should succeed to barren honours, bereft of the estates which should have accompanied these, was admittedly to be regretted, and no one was more keenly alive to this fact than was the "Lady Beaumont Hotham." Still more, however, was she appre-

[1] The manuscript History states that he was four years of age when sent to England, but it also states that he was in his sixtieth year at the date of his death in 1723. If this latter statement is correct he must have been eight years old when sent from the Bermudas, since it is evident from his father's will that he was not sent to England till after the death of the Rector in 1672.

ciative of the antiquity and dignity of her husband's family, and the thought was intolerable to her that it should ever be diminished in importance by the affection which he had borne her, and which had made him place her welfare before the interests of his race. Three months, therefore, after her husband's death, and strange to say during the lifetime of her own son, she settled upon Charles Hotham, the heir-presumptive, the reversion of the entire property at her decease, merely retaining the power to vary this gift as she might subsequently see fit.

From this we may conclude that Lady Hotham then knew her own son to be foredoomed to an early grave; nevertheless, while thus generously providing for the future of the man who was to succeed him, she did not forget that such provision would still be withheld till her own demise, and that in the interval Charles Hotham would be kept out of the estate which should have been his, and be without adequate means to uphold his position. This being so, the wise and kindly lady determined further to right the wrong in a manner peculiarly gratifying to herself.

Only two of her daughters had reached maturity. One of these, as we have seen, had married a Yorkshire landowner and was alive at the date of her father's death, but the elder, Elizabeth, who died in 1684, had been wedded when only twelve years of age to another Yorkshire neighbour, William Gee, Esq., of Bishop's Burton. Dying thus prematurely, this lady left a daughter Bridget, who thenceforward was brought up by her grandmother, Lady Hotham, and in course of time grew into an exceedingly beautiful woman, charming in mind as she was in person. Lady Hotham who, in the years which were foregone, had suffered so many sorrows and seen so many of her children predecease her, now lavished upon this granddaughter all the affection of a mother. The temptation therefore must have been great to leave the property and wealth which were absolutely at her disposal to this beautiful girl who engrossed her entire affection.

In this dilemma, the manuscript History relates, "The Lady Beaumont Hotham" sent one day for her young cousin, Charles Hotham, and when he came, "taking him by the hand, in the kindest manner" she addressed him as follows:—

SIR CHARLES HOTHAM, THE 4TH BARONET
BRIGADIER-GENERAL AND MEMBER FOR BEVERLEY

Your character and amiable qualities have long been known and valued by me and I sincerely feel for the unpleasant situation in which the will of my dear husband has placed you. Head of an ancient and honourable family, representative of so much worth and talent, you ought in justice to possess the family estate. You know the merits and the beauty of your cousin Gee, whose heart I am persuaded is disengaged. If your affections are not fixed, and you could gain her love, the union would be highly gratifying to me. I should with cheerfulness restore to you the family property, reserving to myself such an annuity as would be sufficient for my wants.

Charles Hotham, delighted and surprised, expressed the deepest gratitude to the Lady Beaumont for such unparalleled generosity, assuring her that he had long and ardently admired his cousin, and that he should assume himself the happiest man possible could he but engage her heart. "He now became the open and avowed admirer of Miss Gee, he studied to ingratiate himself by the most tender assiduities, and strove to gain her love. But unhappily neither the fine appearance, nor the future rank and prospects of the suitor, nor his intrinsic merit and excellence of character appeared to make any impression on the object of his love. She positively rejected his addresses, refusing to accept the offer of his hand," and he returned to Lady Hotham disappointed and distressed, deploring such a decision and lamenting his misfortune.

The gentle lady with the wise and kindly face received the unhappy suitor most affectionately and heard the tidings which he brought with evident concern. Her charming little romance was shattered, but her duty to her was plain. "I am distressed," she said, "to hear my granddaughter's answer. I thought your personal advantages, accomplishments, and character, supported by your rank and views in life, would have ensured the favourable reception of your addresses. You have done all you could in acceding to my wishes; and, much as I lament the failure, I shall restore to you the estates and Mansion, reserving to myself five hundred pounds a year, and ending my days in privacy."

So Charles Hotham who, a moment before, had been beggared in fortune as in love, now found himself secured

from the former evil, and thereupon, plucking up heart, he determined to test his luck yet again with regard to the latter. "He," we are told, "renewed his offer of marriage to Miss Gee, who now candidly avowed her attachment to him by the most open and ingenuous confession of her feelings," explaining that she had rejected his first proposal solely because she had not believed that in making it he was a free agent—she had fancied it to be dictated by motives of convenience rather than true love.

"It was impossible," said she, "that so much worth, such talents and accomplishments as yours could be regarded by me with indifference. Excuse me for attributing your first proposal to a wish for gratifying Lady Hotham! Forgive my apprehensions that the prospect of her large possessions prompted you to offer me your hand. Your generous conduct proves how groundless were my fears; and without hesitation or reluctance I confess the strong attachment which I bear you."[1]

So, to the great joy of Lady Hotham, these two were married on September 9th, 1690, and the following month she made over to the bridegroom all the property then in her possession together with her reversion to the rest of the estates. In this indenture, dated October 28th, 1690, she expressly states that this gift is "for the support and preservation of the name and family of Hotham, so long as it shall please Almighty God."

Thus, when her son ended his lonely existence in Holland the following year, she knew that her husband's family was bereft of none of its ancient importance, while the happiness of her beloved granddaughter was likewise secured. For herself, in accordance with her promise, she reserved only an annuity of £500 a year; and retiring with this to a farmhouse at Dalton she there ended her days peacefully eight years later, and was buried near her husband in South Dalton church.

[1] From the MS. History by the Rev. the Honble. F. Hotham. In this account the writer makes the mistake of stating that these events occurred after Charles Hotham had succeeded to the baronetcy; but, as shown above, Sir John Hotham, the third Bart., did not die till August, 1691, and Charles Hotham, afterwards the fourth Bart., married his cousin Bridget Gee eleven months before that date.

As might be anticipated, the love match between Sir Charles and Bridget Gee proved to be an exceedingly happy one. They became the parents of five handsome children, two sons, Charles and Beaumont, and three daughters,[1] of whom the second, Philippa, was noted as one of the most beautiful women of her day. We are told that as the years passed Sir Charles continued to be regarded by his contemporaries as a man of unusual learning; while "his honourable and manly spirit was held in admiration by his family." Indeed, the few anecdotes which have survived respecting him, show him to have been of strong determination, courage and dignity, while in fearlessness of speech and action he did not belie his ancestry. The following story is perhaps peculiarly illustrative of his character.

In the year 1695 he was returned to Parliament for Scarborough in the North Riding, and represented that place during the remainder of King William's reign. On the accession of Queen Anne, he was elected for Beverley and continued to represent that borough during the rest of his life—throughout the reign of Anne, and for some years during that of George I. On one occasion, however, there was a contested election for this latter seat, during which it so happened that party spirit, even for those days, ran unusually high. The public-houses had probably, according to custom, been open for many days at the expense of the respective candidates, and the electors became too inflamed with the unlimited supply of drink to be any longer responsible for their actions. The partisans of both political antagonists at length resorted to open violence, and since the opponent of Sir Charles was most popular with the masses, his own supporters got the worst of the encounter. At last the mob, getting more and more beyond control, seized Sir Charles's eldest son, Colonel Hotham, and began attacking him with such fury that his life

[1] Elizabeth, the eldest, born 1695, married Sir T. Style, Bart. (see page 130), by whom she had Sir Charles Style, Bart., married to a sister of Richard Wingfield, Viscount Powerscourt, in Ireland.

Philippa, the beautiful second daughter, was born in 1701, and married Lieut.-Colonel W. Gee. She died in 1728, leaving two most lovely children, a son and a daughter, who both died young. Her husband, who married again, was killed by a musket shot at the Battle of Fontenoy in Flanders, April 30th, 1745, at the head of the 20th Regiment of Foot, of which he was Lieut.-Colonel.

was in imminent danger. Sir Charles was standing upon the hustings beside the other candidate when news was brought to him of the Colonel's peril. Not a moment was to be lost if he wished to save his son's life, but under existing conditions it seemed impossible to rescue the victim from his fate. No aid was available which could overcome the rioters at a moment's notice, and no arguments could be heard above the prevailing din. Yet Sir Charles did not hesitate. Quick as thought he drew his sword, seized his astonished rival by the collar, and pointing his weapon at the breast of the startled man, exclaimed—"*Sir, stop your mob and order my son to be released, for, by the God who made me, this sword shall pass through your body the very moment he falls!*" The mob, astounded at so unusual a spectacle upon the hustings, hushed their noise, the words of Sir Charles were heard distinctly, and well aware that he was not the man to utter a threat which he would fail to fulfil, they trembled for their favourite. Promptly they released the Colonel, and as promptly Sir Charles restored his sword to its sheath, subsequently resuming his business as though nothing had happened.

On another occasion one of his daughters was on the point of being married to a Yorkshire gentleman, when suddenly the intended bridegroom wrote a letter to Sir Charles in which, making some frivolous excuses, he begged permission to break off the match. Sir Charles received this letter in his study at his house in London, and at once sending for his son, Colonel Hotham, bade him read it. As soon as the Colonel had done so, the following laconic conversation ensued between father and son.

"Sir," said the Colonel, "what is your pleasure?"

"One of us," observed Sir Charles, "must fight this Yorkshire squire; for such an insult offered to our family must not remain a day unpunished. *I* have no objection to do so, but as my sword arm is grown weak, perhaps you are more equal to the business than myself."

"Sir," rejoined the Colonel, "not a moment shall be lost. I will find my second, and call the man out immediately."

"Do so," said Sir Charles. "I will meet you in the Ring within an hour and bring a surgeon with me."

The parties met; the Colonel soon disarmed the Squire

who begged his life, and within a couple of hours from the receipt of the obnoxious letter the insult which it had contained was avenged !

But although thus prompt and decisive in action, Sir Charles was nevertheless, when occasion demanded, capable of exercising unusual self-control under great provocation. Of this the following incident affords proof.

He was one day entertaining a large company at his house when, after dinner, his guests begged him to let them see a treasure that he not unnaturally considered one of the most valuable in his possession. This was a small parchment, said to be the original grant of the Hotham estates by William the Conqueror. It is impossible to say now to what this deed actually had reference, but there is no doubt that it was of great antiquity, and that for generations in the family it had been regarded as a unique and priceless possession. Sir Charles's second son, Beaumont Hotham, afterwards the seventh baronet, was fond of describing it in later life. He had often seen it, when a boy, he said, and had more than once been allowed to hold it in his hands. It was a small, square piece of parchment with a seal pendant, and on it was transcribed in a fair hand some writing in Norman-French.

Whatever its purport, Sir Charles regarded it with untold reverence ; but he good-naturedly fetched it and handed it round the table. Each of the guests, in turn, commented with interest on the great age of the document, on the conciseness of a deed which was no larger than the palm of a man's hand, and on the neat, clear writing in which it was indited.

At last, in the course of its progress, it reached Colonel Strickland, a Yorkshire neighbour, who on this disastrous occasion one is led to conclude had, like the electors of Beverley previously described, been treated too well to be fully responsible for his actions. Glancing at the deed casually, he exclaimed crossly—"*Curse this musty parchment—it only stops the bottle !*" and before anyone could suspect his intention, he had tossed the precious grant into the fire. The company, dumbfounded, rushed forward to save it, but in vain ; dry with age, it burst into instant flame, and in a moment not a particle of it remained.

The consternation of all who had witnessed this unfortunate

event quickly changed to alarm at its probable consequences. "All present," we are told in the old account, "knew Sir Charles's spirit; the love he bore his family, his pride in its antiquity, and the value he attached to that original and priceless document." All knew, too, that no shadow of fear would deter him from meting out punishment where it was due. Moreover, as has been pointed out, he was a man of unusually powerful build, and his son, afterwards Sir Beaumont, when telling the story in later life, always said—"*I quite expected my father would seize the offender and put him on the fire after the grant.*" The surprise of the onlookers was therefore great when Sir Charles, showing scarcely a sign of the distress and indignation which he could not help feeling, turned to the culprit with quiet dignity, and merely remarked—"Sir, I thank you. Perhaps you do not know that you have destroyed a treasure which nothing can replace—a relic priceless from its age, which for generations has been prized by my family. You have deprived me of what was formerly the only title-deed of the Hotham estates!"

History fails to relate the effect of this rebuke on the delinquent, but considerable admiration was afterwards expressed by the rest of the company at the remarkable self-control which their host had exhibited under such trying circumstances.

As these three stories may be said to illustrate respectively the presence of mind, determination and dignity displayed by Sir Charles, so a fourth may serve to show his fortitude. It is one, however, which must sound apocryphal to modern ears, yet in view of the drastic methods in vogue with our forefathers, as well as the detail with which it was punctiliously recorded in certain copies of the family history, we may certainly lend it credence.

Sir Charles—the story is slightly prosaic—at one time suffered considerable inconvenience from a painful joint in his right foot. As has been stated, he bore pain with exemplary patience and courage when it was "not to be removed by human means," but when the evil was eradicable, no measures were too stringent for him to adopt in the hope of ridding himself of the trouble. One day at the breakfast table he remarked that he considered he had endured his present

infliction long enough, and that he intended to do so no longer. Without further explanation, the meal ended, he retired as usual to his study, where he placed a poker in the fire and sent for a hatchet. As soon as the poker was red-hot, he took the hatchet, struck off his great toe, and quickly cauterised the wound. In process of time he put on his stocking and shoe once more, and walking complacently into the drawing-room, observed with a smile—" Well, *that* offender will trouble me no more ! "

The only other sidelight upon the character of Sir Charles is afforded by a note from a friend, which shows him to have been regarded as a man prompt in business and punctilious in the discharge of his pecuniary obligations. The identity of the writer is lost, but this does not detract in interest from the little homely items of gossip which the missive imparts :—

For Sir Charles Hotham of Scorborough
nigh Beverley
York shyer

4th Aug 1699

Ever Hon^{d} & no lesse
Heartyly beloved Friend

Your ter [letter] of 31st Past, with a Bill of Exchange inclosed in it, drawn by W. Gee upon Mr Robert Brown for 40li at 8 days sight, is come safe to my hand, and when ye money is received I shall send you my Receipt for half a year's rent, due and ending at Midsumer last.

Sir, I was so well assured that you would send me this money at your owne convenyance, that I never writt any ter about it.

(Sir) we congratulate your lady being safe brought to bed, & hope ye good health of all yo^{r} Family.

I made vizites pretty often to Park Street, espetially since my Lady Beaumont's departure, and finding things allways safe & well, I did not trouble you with any ter about it. Yor coachman is carefull. & Nanny is allways wthin except when she is att church, where I see her very constant. Wee have had more heat this summer than in 7 years before, which made us retreat into the cuntry to a seat called Headston hous in Middlesex, where my wholl Family hath bin about a moneth, and may probably stay one moneth more ; being now heer in the midst of our corne harvest and much wett weather, after $\frac{a}{m}$ incessant drowth, which made our hay very well saved, but scarce, and not aboue half a cropp in our uplands.

The Duke and Duchess of Leeds[1] have both bin ill togeather hee of a stoppage, & shee of an Ague. He is on ye mending hand, but shee is relapsed.

My Lord of Dorsett was rob'd near Tyburne of 200. gynnys & his George,[2] my Wife with much Devotion remembers her service, and I remain

Honoured Sir

Yours at Command

Hugh Squier."

As in private life Sir Charles was popular and esteemed, his public career was eventful and distinguished. Constantly at Court and mingling with the diplomatic circles of his day, he was, however, wont to complain that, although considered one of the first classic scholars of his generation, he would willingly have renounced all his skill in Latin and Greek for half the knowledge of the French language which either of his sons possessed. His early training for the Church had proved unsuited to his after-career, while his active life left him little scope for the indulgence of those scholarly tastes which he had evidently inherited from his father. Besides his political labours, he was appointed respectively to the command of several Regiments of Foot,[3] later being one of the four gentlemen who were called "Queen Anne's Colonels." Some of his regiments were broken, others he resigned, and one is said to have been taken from him for an over-bold speech which he made—surely in accordance with the traditions of his house.[4] Ere that took place, however, having been raised

[1] Sir Thomas Osborne, who became Lord High Treasurer of England, and after various honours, was created Duke of Leeds, May 4th, 1694. He married Bridget, daughter of Montagu Bertie, Earl of Lindsay, Lord Great Chamberlain of England, and died July 26th, 1712.

[2] A figure of St. George on horseback, engaging the dragon, worn pendent from the collar by the Knights of the Garter.

[3] His commissions in the several regiments which he commanded bore the following dates:

27th of Foot, March 25th, 1705—broke in 1713.
44th of Foot, July 22nd, 1715—broke.
16th of Dragoons, July 22nd, 1717—broke.
36th of Foot, July 7th, 1719.
8th of Foot, December 3rd, 1720.
1st or Royal Dragoons, April 10th, 1721, of which he was Colonel at his death.

[4] The MS. History asserts that this speech was made in Parliament on January 1st, 1709; but Parliament was not sitting at that date.

by Queen Anne to the rank of Brigadier-General, he served under Lord Galway in Spain, and was present at the Battle of Almanza in 1707, in which contest his friend General Carpenter,[1] commanded the rear.

It was while he was thus far from home on active service that the great sorrow of his life occurred. His wife, Lady Hotham, formerly Bridget Gee, still in the prime of life and with her beauty unimpaired, was stricken with cancer. It at last became evident that the end was approaching, and that she would never again see the husband whom she loved so tenderly. Therefore, as she lay dying, she penned to him a letter of farewell, which, in its mingled tragedy and resignation, is singularly pathetic:—

Letter of Bridget Hotham to her husband Sir Charles Hotham as she lay dying of Cancer

Providence haueing Denyd me the great satisfaction of takeing my ffinal leave of you, my Dearest, in person, I leave this with my best prayers and wishes that god may both spiritually and temporaily for ever bless you, and giue you that command over yr passions that they may never lead you to act what is below your caracter in the world & wt may be the readyest way to ruin yr poor little ones I haue left behind mee ; & tho' my loss is certainly a great one to ym, yet 'tis vastly in your power to heighten or aleviate itt. God put it in yr heart to doe what may giue you ye greatest peace at ye last, for a quiet mind I find of great prize in this my decaying, dying condition.

For I can appeall to my Eternall judge how just & tender a wife I've been to you, a Careful mother of my children, & what I've most to reproach myself for was too much loue & anxiety for you bot[h] wn I ought to have wholy trusted providence wth me & all yt belonged me. I die with great comfort, & can easyly resign a life wch has ever been full of care. I have a full beleife you'l haue a just regard for my memory, knowing you'l neuer fill my post wth one who can more faithfully & more affec: serve you. I need not, I hope, desire you to haue a due regard to my ffather, your own obligations to him is sufficient to Excite yt, soe yt good you can doe amongst em I beleive you will.

[1] George Carpenter, a distinguished General, the descendant of an ancient family in Herefordshire and the ancestor of the Earls of Tyrconnel. He was, in 1719, created an Irish peer by the title of Baron Carpenter of Killaghy.

The little legacies & things I woud have done, I've left in a paper to be giuen you.

I think there's nothing more for a poor dying woman to add, but to beg of god & you that you mayn't be soe overcome wth the things of ye perishing world as to indanger your loosing the things Eternell, but y^{t} we may meet in a happyer & better world w^{ch} sure woud be a joy in heaven to

Yr truly ffaithfull & affec: spouse to her last breath

B. Hotham.

I wish yr eldest gerle[1] were well dispos'd on, for she's of an age w^{ch} will most want my care & education, heaven guide her & you !

I being soe tenderly & kindly us'd by my parents & dying in their house, ye expence I've been to em wants some suteable return. y^{e} tea Ket. & china was y^{e} best thing in my poor power, for y^{r} relations you've still y^{e} estate you've ever had to oblige & help y^{m}, soe any mite from me woud be just, unless you'd giue something handsom in my name. Poor Sis: Eliz Gee hath been a true frend & carefull tender nurs to me to my last, & beyond w^{t} I can mention, Lord grant all enmitys & unjust suspitions to cease.

The little list which enumerated the worldly possessions of the dying woman and the destination she desired for each, was, like the letter, left in charge of her father to deliver to her husband on his return:—

What small matters I beg may be done to my children, friends and Servts by Sr Charles when I am dead.

To Cha: my eldest Sonn, Grandmother Hotham's picture, and ye two Gold Coronation Medals, and ye two spurroyals.[2]

To Beaumont, six broad Pieces.

To my three girls, divided equally, my Diamond ear rings ; each of y^{m} a broad piece.

To my Dear Father my great Picture or a Coppy.

To my mother and him my silver tea kettle wth the tea table and china y^{t} is in their house.

[1] Elizabeth Hotham, then twelve years of age. She afterwards married Sir Thomas Style, Bart., of Wateringbury, in Kent. It will be remembered that her grandmother, after whom she was named, married William Gee when only twelve years old.

[2] Spur-royal, a gold coin of the reign of Edward VI, so called from having on the reverse a sun with rays, somewhat resembling the rowel of a spur.

BRIDGET, WIFE OF SIR CHARLES HOTHAM, THE 4TH BARONET
OB. 1707

From a plumbago in the possession of Mrs. Jackson

To my sister Eliz: Gee my Gold watch, chain and trinkets y^{t} hang at it.
To Sister Katy a locket of my hair, and broad piece.
To Sister Dolly Gee my shel Pearl earings, & ring or Locket of my hair.
To Brother Gee my father's Picture and a ring.
To Brother James a ring.
To Brother and Sister Best each a ring.
To Aunt Hayes a Ring.
All of them with my hair in them. Illustrated as yu please, with 6 more hair Ringes set round with sparkes to 6 Ladys I shall appoint, viz: Lady Preston, Lady Guise, Aunt Gee, Mrs Allison, Mrs Nuneton, Mrs Mary Palmer.
To Cosin Hebletwait at London my Little Silver tea Kettle.
To Taylor all my wearing cloths, linnen
To my eldest Daugther my best laced head wth my sables tippet & Gold tippet string
To my Sister Best ye silver Coffee pott
To the children ye Gowns and Petticoat I wrought
To Sister Katy a suit of laced night cloths
To my Sister Dolly another
I've desired my father y^{t} all the servants y^{t} are with me when I die may all have mourning & each (a) Guiney a-piece
I beg Anne Raghill may be considered.
And all my father's servts may be rewarded, Mrs Powley double the Rest.

B. Hotham.

I've writ in Pain and at severall times, wch must excuse blotts.

So Lady Hotham died and was laid to rest at Scorborough on August 4th, 1707, her last days having apparently been saddened by the unavailing hope that her husband might return ere she expired, as well as by the mysterious silence maintained in his letters with regard to her sad condition. This, it seems probable, was due to his being at that time a prisoner in the hands of the enemy, and unable to receive the communications sent from his home; but the day after her burial her father wrote to Sir Charles as follows:—

William Gee to Sir Charles Hotham

Beverley ye 5th of August 1707.

I'me under great discouragement, Dr Sr, to write to you, since I never knew yu rec'd any of mine since the 15th of Xber

last, y^u have not mentioned the receipt of any, in y^m to me, nor have yu taken notice of it in any of my poor Daughter's y^t's now dead & buried, I dare say this is ye 11th or 12th letter I have wrote to you, in most of y^m I made mention of her calamitous and Dangerous condition, w^ch I hoped wou'd have alarm'd yu so y^t you wou'd have vsed all means to come over. She's buried wth all y^e decency & frugallity I know how to doe, she died ye 30th of July last, here at Beverley, t' was her desire to me to be buried at Scorborough by her children, and it was likewise her passionate desire y^t I wou'd bring her down from London to come and die here among her friends, she being before y^t given over & forsaken by ye Physihans & Surgyens . during her sicknesse she wrote a paper w^ch was given to me after she died, the true coppy of it is wrote in her owne hand & signed so. . . .

Youl believe y^t I'me under great uneasinesse while I write to yu on this subject. all I shall say is I beg more particularly y^r directions, and I partticularly wish for y^r return into England, on a much greater concern even y^t of y^r Children. I'l break up y^e house at London shortly, Robin shall be left in it at board wages, till further order : y^r serv^ts shall be dismissed & put in mourning as my D: desired, & my Servts rewarded as she desired.

I beseach God to blesse you & direct yu. being sincerely
Y^r affect friend & most humble Servt
W. Gee.

There's some little wine left wch I'le dispose as she desired, for y^t won't admitt staying for y^r drinking. I design Miss Hotham for Cosin Best's care, since it was her mother's desire ; ye 2 younger children I will send for Down to be w^th me ; & y^e boys as they were.

So, when Sir Charles at last returned to England, it was to find no wife to welcome him ; and although later he married Lady Mildred, daughter of James Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, and widow of Sir John Uvedale Corbett of Longnor, Salop, this union, of which no issue survived, does not seem to have been a happy one. He was separated from this second wife for some years before his death,[1] and the dying words of Bridget who had loved him so well must then often have recurred to him

[1] She survived Sir Charles and was buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster, where a monument was erected to her memory.

—that he would never fill her place with any other woman who would serve him more faithfully and more affectionately than she had done.

Another loss had been his during his absence in Spain, Scorborough, the ancient family seat of the Hothams was then burnt down. The cause of the accident is unrecorded, even the precise date of its occurrence ; and, as before pointed out, no one has now any knowledge of the age-old treasures which must have also perished in the flames. It was a strange coincidence that during the ownership of the man in whom had ended that direct succession, preserved during so many centuries, there should likewise come to an end the home which had sheltered those generations from a past almost equally remote.

Whether Sir Charles, in this instance, bore the irrevocable with fortitude, none may say ; but apparently finding the site of his vanished home too full of painful memories, he afterwards " when not in London, made Beverley his place of residence, erecting there a large and spacious house." He likewise added rooms to the farmhouse at Dalton, endeared to him by the recollection of " Lady Beaumont Hotham," and there his family occasionally lived during the summer months. Towards the close of the reign of Queen Anne, however, he was much engrossed with the political situation. It was suspected that the Queen was planning to bring over to England as her successor her young half-brother, the son of James II by Mary Beatrice of Modena ; and the threatened accession of a papist was as obnoxious to Sir Charles as it had been formerly to his predecessor " the Revolution Sir John." We are told that he therefore became " deeply engaged with the leaders of the Whig party in preventing this design," which the death of Queen Anne at length frustrated ; and for eight and a half years Sir Charles subsequently lived under the rule of George I.

But those early days of the new reign were haunted by the vision of a pretender to the throne whose claim was more legitimate than that of the Hanoverian monarch and whose ascendancy might yet be proclaimed. A story, of which various versions were current, pricked the imagination of the public. It was said that at the first masquerade given after the accession of the new King there appeared among the

crowd a mysterious lady whose face was perforce concealed, and who persistently dogged the footsteps of the Sovereign. At last the Unknown proffered the request that the King would quaff with her a draught of wine. George, being also masked, and thinking that his identity was not suspected, was amused at the adventure and readily agreed ; whereupon the stranger, filling a glass, pledged him pointedly in a toast of startling significance—"*To the uncrowned King of England!*" The Hanoverian Sovereign nevertheless did not hesitate ; raising his own glass with due civility he responded gravely—"*I drink with all my heart to the health of all unfortunate Princes!*" Whereat the mask, once more mingling with the crowd, was speedily lost to sight.

In 1715, however, these vague rumours respecting the papist claimant took more definite shape. A rebellion in favour of " the uncrowned King " broke out in the north, and Sir Charles Hotham was ordered to proceed with General Carpenter, his former comrade at Almanza, against the Jacobites who had massed in Northumberland under the leadership of the young Earl of Derwentwater. The two Generals prevented the insurgents from seizing Newcastle, and Sir Charles being then left to guard that town, Carpenter, with three regiments, pursued the Jacobite army to Preston where, all supplies being cut off, they shortly surrendered. This ended the rebellion, and Sir Charles gained considerable *kudos* for the distinguished part he had played in its suppression ; while the unfortunate young Derwentwater, one of the romantic figures of history, was subsequently tried and executed on Tower Hill, February 24th, 1716.

But in another matter besides his strenuous opposition to the papist succession, Sir Charles was destined to sustain the earlier traditions of his house. Despite his being a man of unusually fine physique he was little past the prime of life when he was stricken with a " painful, lingering, and hopeless malady." Possibly he then sought in vain in the old " Booke of Receeats," reminiscent of his early years, for some nostrum warranted to cure all diseases. Possibly his faith in that treasured volume of his forbears had long ere this date evaporated. However that may be, we are told that he bore his sufferings with uncomplaining patience, till, at the age of

sixty, he expired on January 8th, 1723, at Bristol, whither he may have gone to consult some physician of repute. His body was subsequently brought back to Dalton, and its burial there is thus recorded :—

The Honble Sir Charles Hotham, Baronet, a Brigadier-General, Collonel of ye Royal Regiment of 9th Dragoons and Member of Parliament for Beverley was buryd in the vault here made by himself. Jany 20th, 1722.[1]

[1] Old style.

CHAPTER VII

CE GRAND ORACLE

AS might be expected in view of the gifts so lavishly bestowed by nature upon Sir Charles Hotham and the beautiful Bridget Gee, their eldest son Charles, who now became the fifth baronet, was a man remarkable for fascination of mind and person. Born on April 25th, 1693, he was thirty years of age at the date of his father's death, and the family history describes him as follows :—

He was of excellent and manly understanding ; very masculine in his appearance, remarkably ready in his military exercises ; well versed in the polite languages ; well bred ; and in every respect and sense of the word a man of fashion. He inherited the honour and spirit of his family, and was undoubtedly very clever and charming, possessed of talents and accomplishments, combined with a most amiable disposition.

Praise could hardly go further ! but the portrait of this second Sir Charles, as well as the story of his career, serves to corroborate this account. Although his picture appears to have been taken when the first charm of youth was past and he was already waxing stouter in form and face, yet the regularity of feature is not lost which, in earlier life, must have rendered him handsome, while it is evident that, like his father, he was tall of stature, of powerful build and possessed of an air of stateliness which accorded well with the position he was called upon to occupy. Essentially a courtier and a fine gentleman, Sir Charles, it is said, exhibited a pride of race and a *hauteur* of manner calculated to abash those of commoner clay ; yet he had the directness of the soldier, the simplicity of an honest man, and an abhorrence of subter-

SIR CHARLES HOTHAM, THE 5TH BARONET
PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE COURT OF BERLIN IN 1730,
AND GROOM OF THE BEDCHAMBER TO GEORGE II
Portrait by J. Richardson

fuge which was to render a certain episode in his life all the more unpalatable.

He entered upon his military duties somewhat prematurely ; he was but thirteen when he received a commission in the Army, dated July 17th, 1706, and became a Captain in one of his father's regiments,[1] but later, as mentioned in the previous chapter, he was Colonel of the Royal Horse Grenadier Guards. During his early years, however, he journeyed out to Hanover, either in a military capacity, or possibly in imitation of his contemporaries, for at this date, when it became probable that the Elector of that country would shortly succeed to the throne of England, many thought it politic to visit his Court. Thither, therefore, young Hotham repaired, and there became intimate with the Electoral Prince George, afterwards Prince of Wales, which friendship was not only destined to be lifelong but, as we shall see, there subsequently existed an unacknowledged relationship between himself and his Royal companion.

During his visit to the Hanoverian Court he likewise became acquainted with a lady who, in the near future, was to be constantly in his society at St. James's, and who, little as he then anticipated it, was in 1752 to become closely connected with his own family. This was the celebrated Mrs. Howard, afterwards Lady Suffolk, then in the height of her charm, whose early career we must pause to review.

Henrietta Hobart was the eldest daughter of Sir Henry Hobart, of Blickling, Norfolk, the fourth baronet of his family. She was also granddaughter of the famous John Hampden,[2] friend of a former Hotham, the hapless Governor of Hull. The exact date of her birth is not known, but it appears probable that she was born in 1688, and therefore was five years older than young Captain Hotham. She had married about 1708 the Honble. Charles Howard, third son of Henry, fifth Earl of Suffolk ; a union which was far from happy on account

[1] It was no unusual thing for military rank to be given to children. For instance, we find that William, afterwards 2nd Earl of Albemarle, made application to Queen Anne for a captaincy in the Army when he was aged three and a half years, and was given a company in the 1st Regiment of Foot Guards, which bestowed on him the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, at the age of fifteen.

[2] Sir John Hobart, in 1656, married as his second wife Mary, daughter and, in her issue, coheiress of John Hampden, the Patriot. Their son was Sir Henry Hobart, the father of Henrietta.

of the violent temper and reckless extravagance of Mr. Howard, who soon exhausted all the income not settled upon his wife. The young couple, therefore, greatly reduced in fortune, had repaired to the Court of Hanover, probably with a view to paving the way for their future advantage at the Court of Queen Anne's successor.

A story runs that, on arriving in Hanover, Mrs. Howard, in order to provide a suitable entertainment for some person with whom it was desirable that she should ingratiate herself, caused her head to be shorn of its luxuriant tresses and sold these for the sum of twenty pounds to the manufacturers of the expensive wigs then in fashion. The money thus procured appears to have been well expended. The enterprising lady, whose amiability and captivating manners were soon discovered to enhance her natural beauty, rapidly became the fashion at the Hanoverian Court. The aged Electress Sophia, mother of the Elector, showed a marked preference for her; and ere the Electress died, some weeks before Queen Anne, Mrs. Howard had already secured the favour of the Electoral Princess, Caroline of Anspach. Thus, on the accession of the Elector to the throne of England as George I, Mr. Howard was named Groom of the Bedchamber to the new King, and Mrs. Howard was appointed one of the bedchamber women to the new Princess of Wales.

This might have been satisfactory had not two separate Courts forthwith been established, between which the greatest rivalry subsisted. The elder Whig politicians adhered to the King; the younger lords and the prettiest and most lively ladies formed the circle of the Prince and Princess of Wales at Norfolk House. To the former belonged Mr. Howard; to the latter the fascinating Mrs. Howard, centre of a Court of her own where in wit and popularity she soon reigned supreme. And to this younger and livelier circle, as well by age as by inclination, there drifted young Charles Hotham, who probably on this account was in scant favour with George I.

For the old King's bitter resentment against his son was only surpassed by his detestation of his son's wife, Caroline, whom he referred to venomously as "*Cette diablesse, Madame la Princesse.*" So violent was the antagonism between the two Courts that when, in 1720, a temporary reconciliation was

effected, the country went mad with joy. On this auspicious occasion, which appropriately befell on St. George's Day, the officers of the rival establishments met, embraced and congratulated each other on so incredible an event, while the church bells were rung all day, and the troops in various parts of the town fired volleys and drank healths till they were reported to have been "considerably disordered."

This was but a transient *rapprochement;* yet little recked young Hotham of the disapprobation of George I so long as he could frequent the gay circle which surrounded the young Prince and Princess, or their still more attractive attendant, Mrs. Howard. The Court of the old King, presided over by the tall, lean Duchess of Kendal—nicknamed "the Maypole"—compared ill with the brilliant assemblies which each evening met in the apartments of the fascinating bedchamber woman of Princess Caroline, whither gravitated all who were beautiful, witty or sparkling. Thither came Philip Dormer, young Lord Stanhope, for whom Hotham developed a lasting friendship, —cynic, wit, orator, statesman, and of remarkable capacity, but, before all, a man of fashion; there came "Hervey the handsome," gossip and historian of the lively Court; there came men of literary fame—for Mrs. Howard affected such—and we are told that in her more intimate society "Pope became playful, Swift decent, and the simple-minded poet Gay was as much at home with the great lady as the great lady's lap-dog." And thither came, too, rivals, whom she smilingly tolerated near her throne—the charming Miss Bellenden, loveliest of the Maids of Honour, the graceful Miss Lepell, afterwards Lady Hervey, and many whose charm and vivacity wrought havoc among the gallants who basked in their society.

Accounts, indeed, differ respecting the true cause of Mrs. Howard's ascendancy. Some writers portray her beauty as remarkable; others, and they are in the majority, maintain that her fascination lay rather in manner and disposition. Horace Walpole states dispassionately that she "was of a just height, well made, extremely fair, with the finest light-brown hair; was remarkably genteel, and always well dressed with taste and simplicity. Those were her personal charms, for her face was regular and agreeable rather than beautiful; and

these attractions she retained, with little diminution, to her death at the age of 79. Her mental qualifications were not so shining; her eyes and countenance showed her character which was grave and mild. Her strict love of truth and her accurate memory were always in unison. She was discreet without being reserved, and having no bad qualities, and being constant to her connections, she preserved uncommon respect to the end of her life."[1]

Soon, however, it became remarked that Mrs. Howard was in noticeable favour with the Prince himself; and young Hotham must have been aware that there were many who hinted that the admiration of His Royal Highness was not all platonic. To-day it is difficult to ascertain the truth of this rumour. The licence of that age was such that any token of admiration on the part of the Prince would at once be open to this construction; while, on the other hand, the preference of the Prince, whatever its nature, would be held flattering rather than damaging to its object. The fact that Caroline of Anspach exhibited affection for her attendant has been cited in contradiction of this scandal, but the complaisance of that Princess in regard to the infidelity of her husband is too well known to render this contention of value. It should rather be borne in mind that the gossip rests chiefly upon the evidence of Lord Hervey and of Horace Walpole, both men who never hesitated to sacrifice truth to fiction when the latter was likely to prove more entertaining to the public; and since many of such assertions respecting Mrs. Howard were founded upon *on dits* which can be easily disproved, the rest must be accepted with extreme caution.

Meantime, whatever the attraction of the bright circle that scintillated at the Prince's Court, young Hotham became more deeply attached to a lady the very antithesis of some of those fair, frail beauties whose society he there frequented. This was Lady Gertrude Stanhope, eldest daughter of Philip, third Earl of Chesterfield, and sister to Hotham's great friend Philip Dormer, to whom, in her manner of life and thought, she formed, however, a marked contrast. Of a serious turn of mind, even in her girlhood, she was unaffected, unworldly and sincere; and when in 1724, the year after his father's death,

[1] *Suffolk Letters* (1824), Vol. I, pages xix–xx.

young Hotham married her, it was with every prospect of happiness. The following letter written by his father-in-law shortly after the wedding, despite its characteristic formality, shows the satisfaction with which the new relationship was regarded by the family of Stanhope:—

The Earl of Chesterfield to Sir Charles Hotham

Aprill the 25th 1724.

Sr

I have received yours of the 18th instant and do here assure you I wish you may be always as happy with the Lady Gertrude as you tell me you are now, and am glad if I have any way contributed to your satisfaction. I am to thank you for your affectionate expressions to me, and do believe (by the Character I have heard of Sr Charles Hotham) they may prove sincere in a very insincere World, which must make them so much more acceptable to me.

The favour of a Man whose great misfortune of Deafness has made him a Recluse, is hardly worth the asking for, however I can assure you that I shall always be ready to serve you in any thing that is in my power, and the more so, upon the account of the Friendship that is between you and my Son the Lord Stanhope. may it long continue as firm as I take it to be now.

I know that at this juncture you must be taken up (I think I might say troubl'd) with the compliments and superficial ceremonies of the whole Town, and that I may not be in the number of the troublesome I will detain you no longer who am

Sr

Your affectionate Friend and Father

CHESTERFIELD.

For Sr Charles Hotham Bart.
at the Lady Marchioness of Hallifaxes house in Park
Place near St Jameses
London.

Sir Charles, after his marriage, was perforce thrown yet more frequently into the society of his brother-in-law, Philip Dormer, who in 1726 succeeded his father as fourth Earl of Chesterfield. Dedicated as heretofore to fashion, exquisite in dress, punctilious in manner, cynical and worldly as young Chesterfield remained, about this date a romance temporarily disturbed the well-bred tenour of his

days, and there were many who expected that he would follow the example of his friend Sir Charles and become the husband of a lady with whom he was popularly supposed to be in love. The object of his affections was Melusina, Countess of Walsingham, so-called "niece" of the Duchess of Kendal, but in reality the daughter of that lady and George I. Dowered not merely with good looks, but heiress to her mother's large wealth, she was also credited with being the future inheritor of a substantial portion from the King, who never failed to exhibit a paternal interest in her welfare. In this particular instance, however, that solicitude was inconvenient to poor Melusina, for news of the wildness of young Chesterfield and his recklessness at cards having reached the Royal ear, the King, who viewed extravagance as the worst of crimes, interfered *in loco parentis* to prevent the match. The lovers separated; Philip Dormer to console himself with many other fair faces; Melusina to remain faithful to his memory, and eventually, as we shall see, when her youth was past, to prove her constancy to this early attachment.

While this romance waxed and waned, the early wedded life of Sir Charles and Lady Gertrude showed a mingling of happiness and tears. Their firstborn, a son named Charles, born the year after their marriage, died as an infant; and although the next child, a daughter born in 1726, lived to attain womanhood, a second son, George, who came into existence in 1728, likewise expired soon after his birth. Ere that date, however, a change had taken place in Sir Charles's position at Court. In 1727 George I died, and no sooner was George II seated upon the throne than, having created Lord Chesterfield Ambassador at The Hague, he bestowed upon the friend of his youth, Sir Charles Hotham, the post of Groom of the Royal Bedchamber, a position which the latter retained till death. Still more, we are told, Hotham was "so much esteemed at Court that Queen Caroline stood Godmother to his eldest girl, who was named after her illustrious Sponsor; and as a Christening gift, the Queen presented the father of her godchild with a piece of plate bearing the Royal arms."[1] It may be added that Mrs. Howard, that former ornament of the Prince's circle, dressed Queen Caroline

[1] MS. History.

for her coronation, and at the ceremony was the admiration of all beholders in a robe of vivid scarlet and silver which threw into admirable relief her fair complexion and lovely hair. She was forthwith established at St. James's in the rooms lately occupied by the Duchess of Kendal, while her brother, Sir John Hobart, was, at his sister's request, raised to the peerage by the title of Earl of Buckinghamshire.

It was to be expected that Sir Charles would now divide his time between his official duties and that peaceful home life which held for him so much happiness. But before long he was called upon by his Royal master to undertake a task more responsible than any he had hitherto fulfilled, and one which was probably, as already indicated, little congenial to his temperament. In order, however, fully to understand the difficulty and the delicacy of this mission with which he was entrusted, and the manner in which he conducted it, it will be necessary to turn for a time from the Court of George II to glance at the affairs of a neighbouring kingdom.

It will be remembered that the sister of the new King of England, Sophia Dorothea,[1] was married to Frederick William, second King of the infant Principality of Prussia. The political situation affecting this little kingdom, and the conditions then existent at the unhappy Court of Berlin, were so peculiar that they must be briefly recalled.

It was in 1701 that Frederick, Elector of Brandenburg, was raised to the dignity of King of Prussia, that being the only independent portion of his dominions ; and the emancipation of the family of Brandenburg from the yoke of Austria was at first viewed with some amusement by a country which, in the assumption of sovereignty by so inconsiderable a monarch, saw little cause for alarm. Nevertheless it was remarked by those possessing greater perspicuity " that the Emperor of Austria in consenting to such an arrangement ought to hang the Ministers who had given him such treacherous advice " ; and the event proved that there were grounds for this opinion.

Yet, for a while, all seemed well. Frederick, that first King of Prussia, was a vain and frivolous Prince, feeble alike in

[1] Daughter of George I by his marriage with Sophia Dorothea of Zell.

mind and body, who contented himself by expending his time and money in devising fresh pageants, processions, and more precise etiquette for his little Court. It was not till Frederick William, his son, succeeded him upon the throne that Austria began to realise the mistake which she had committed. For this second King of Prussia was obsessed by one idea—the aggrandisement of his little kingdom. To this end he held no sacrifice too great. In two months he had reduced the previous outlay of the Royal establishment to one-fifth of what it had been during the lifetime of his father ; all needless expenses in every department were similarly curtailed ; his efforts to ensure a race of giants for his troops, his press-gang which tore priests from the altar and kidnapped men of abnormal stature throughout the countries of Europe—roused universal indignation ; and in brief, while encouraging commerce and industry, he increased the army till at last a population of two and a half million souls were supporting the unheard of number of 83,000 men under arms. But when success attended his methods, Austria, alarmed, viewed with dismay the growing power of Prussia, and further cause for disquietude was soon her portion.

Without entering into the intricacies of the situation, the main cause of what ensued was as follows. In 1717 Charles VI of Austria had founded an East India Company in Ostend. He had given this company, to the exclusion of all his other subjects, the right and privilege for thirty years of extending their trade to Africa and India. In 1725 he further made a secret treaty of commerce with Spain in favour of such trading, one of the articles of this agreement being an undertaking on his part to compel the restoration to the Spaniards of Gibraltar and Port Mahon, which were then in the possession of the English. The principal maritime powers having discovered the plans of Austria, and recognising therein the ruin of that commerce upon which their own greatness depended, forthwith concluded amongst themselves a defensive alliance in which Prussia joined. Austria, terrified at this league which she had not the power to resist openly, determined upon dissolving it by means of intrigues. Specially inimical to her design, therefore, would be any closer link between England and Prussia, two countries whose Sovereigns were already united

by the tie of relationship ; yet a contingency so undesirable in her view seemed extremely likely to come to pass. It so happened that for long the great ambition of the Queen of Prussia had been to see her daughter Wilhelmine wedded to the future Prince of Wales, son of her brother George who would one day occupy the throne of England. The project had been discussed since the Princess's earliest childhood, and with it was involved another, that of the marriage of Frederick, Prince Royal of Prussia, to Princess Amelia,[1] another child of the future George II. The friendship of so powerful a country as England was palpably to the advantage of the new Principality of Prussia ; yet the achievement of this double union which would further cement it, became strangely hedged about with difficulties that, but for a comprehension of the secret diplomacy of Austria, might seem incredible.

For Austria, in furtherance of her private schemes, had dispatched to the Court of Prussia her Minister Seckendorf. The character of this Envoy, if we may trust the description given of it by Frederick, Crown Prince of Prussia, afterwards Frederick the Great, was "sordid and venal ; his manners were vulgar and uncultivated. Falsehood was become so habitual to him that he had lost the power of speaking the truth." Arriving at the poor Court of Berlin well plied with gold, this emissary found his way made easy before him. He had previously been a friend of Grumkow, Prime Minister to the King of Prussia, a diplomat of more polished exterior than himself but equally unscrupulous. Grumkow at once played into the hands of the Austrian diplomat, and to their schemes Reichenbach, the Prussian Minister at the Court of St. James's, was likewise won over. The task to which this trio of intriguers forthwith devoted themselves was primarily that of preventing any further strengthening of the tie between England and Prussia ; still more of promoting, in so far as was practicable, a disruption between the two countries.

Thus it happened that, subsequently to the year 1725 when Charles VI made his secret treaty with Spain, the friendly relations between the Courts of England and Prussia mysteriously cooled down. "My father was much annoyed,"

[1] Princess Amelia (or Emily) Sophia Eleonora, born June 10th, 1711, died unmarried October 31st, 1786, second daughter of George II.

relates Wilhelmine, "at the postponement of my marriage. Grumkow kept constantly telling him that the King of England was only trying to put him off, and had negociated only to attain the end he had in view, namely to get him over to his side; when he no longer wanted him he would let the mask drop, and pay no more attention to any promises he had made. In this way Grumkow prepared the King to consent to break through the treaty. The King was most anxious for my marriage for more than one reason. England and the other signatories of the Hanoverian Treaty had guaranteed him the infeoffment (investiture) of the Principalities of Jülich and Berg."[1]

But although the scheme of the intriguers involved persuading the King of Prussia that his advantage was his disadvantage, in view of the character of that monarch this was not so difficult as at first sight appeared. The very foibles of Frederick William lent themselves to the plans of his enemies. Like all autocratic natures, his terror of being ruled made him a ready prey to those astute enough to play upon this propensity. "The King," explains his daughter, "had the misfortune to be always deceived by those who least deserved his confidence; and these, knowing his violent temper, used his weakness to assist them in attaining whatever end they wanted."[2] Obstinate as he was arbitrary, he was totally without ballast; an asylum rather than a throne had been more fitting for such a Monarch of Moods. The ungovernable violence of his temper, the vindictive brutality of his anger overpassed the limits of sanity. As has been aptly remarked, he viewed his sceptre as a cudgel, while he ruled his family and his subjects with equal harshness. Vain of his very failings, to cross his selfish will at all times meant disaster—or death; to bow to it was to feed his pride and to earn his unbounded, if transient, approbation.

[1] John Sigismund of Brandenburg, 1608–19, at the death of Duke Albert of Prussia inherited that Duchy through his marriage with the Duke's daughter, and further laid claim to the Duchies of Cleves, Jülich and other lands near the Rhine, which claim was disputed by the Count Palatine of Neuberg. In 1666 the long-vexed question of inheritance to the Rhenish Duchies was settled by an amicable treaty of partition, according to which Cleves, Mark and Ravenstein fell to the share of Prussia, and Jülich and Berg to the Duke of Neuberg. Prussia eventually laid claim to the latter Duchies.

[2] *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, ed. 1837, page 58.

Thus the sufferings and privations to which his family were subjected baffle description. In the rigid economy which prevailed at his Court, not only was the semblance of luxury denied them, but they lacked for bare necessities and seldom had sufficient to eat. The King personally was a gross feeder, and habitually ate, as he invariably drank, too much, more especially when such food and drink could be obtained through the hospitality of one of his subjects. But, partly through malevolence, partly through miserliness, he delighted in starving his family and their retinue, while the existence to which he condemned them, the complete lack of happiness or of any intellectual interest is piteous reading. Despite the creed of that age that Kings, though butchers, could do no wrong, and parents, though tyrants, were sacred, Wilhelmine, Princess of Prussia, has left behind a Memoir of her life which is exceedingly curious, and a few brief quotations from which will serve to refresh our memory and bring before us more vividly than any laboured description what she endured. In this she speaks of the Royal Family dining off "coarse pot-herbs," i.e. carrots and parsnips, which they particularly detested; while in 1726, when they were at Potsdam, she gives an account of their daily life there which is eloquent in its simple statement of facts :—

We led a most sad life. We were awakened at seven every morning by the King's regiment, which exercised in front of the windows of our rooms, which were on the ground floor. The firing went on incessantly—piff, puff—and lasted the whole morning; at ten we went to see my mother, and accompanied her to the room next to the King's, where we sat and sighed for the rest of the morning. Then came dinner-time; the dinner consisted of six small, badly-cooked dishes, which had to suffice for twenty-four persons, so that some had to be satisfied with the mere smell. At table nothing else was talked of but economy and soldiers. The Queen and ourselves, too unworthy to open our mouths, listened in humble silence to the oracles which were pronounced.

When dinner was over, the King sat himself down in a wooden armchair, and slept for two hours. But before doing so, he generally managed to make some unpleasant speech for the Queen or for us. As long as the King slept, I worked, and as soon as he woke up he went away. The Queen then went

back to her room where I read aloud to her till the King returned. . . .

Supper, from which we generally got up hungry, was at eight in the evening. The Queen played at cards with her Lady-in-waiting and mine, who were our only attendants . . . my only resource was my books. I had a small library, which I hid under all the beds and tables, for the King despised all learning, and wished me to occupy myself with nothing but needlework and household duties or details. Had he ever found me writing or reading he would probably have whipped me.

At a later date the Princess describes the daily life at the Court of Berlin where economy and dreariness appear accentuated :—

I had to be with the Queen at ten. We then went with her to the State-room, which was never warmed, and remained there doing nothing till noon. After this we went to the King's private rooms to bid him good-morning, and then went to dinner, to which four-and-twenty guests were invited. The dinner consisted of two dishes, the one vegetables, which were boiled in water, on the top of which floated some melted butter with chopped herbs, the other pork and cabbage, of which every one got only a very small portion. Sometimes a goose was served, or a tough old chicken, and on Sundays there was one sweet dish. A very long-winded person sat at the middle of the table over against the King and narrated the news of the day, on which he then poured forth a flood of political nonsense which engendered a deadly weariness. After dinner the King sat in his armchair near the fire and went to sleep. The Queen and my sisters sat round him and listened to his snores. . . . We went to supper at nine. This meal lasted four or five hours, after which everyone retired to bed. Such was the life we led; it never varied in the least, each day resembled its predecessor.

One imagines that dinner for the large Royal Family, their attendants and twenty-four guests with its one dish of pork, of which each person present could expect only a "very small portion" and were fortunate if they got that. One imagines, too, the mental stagnation, the wasted hours of unspeakable tediousness which that life further represented. Yet the existence thus described was a halcyon one compared

with the tempestuous interludes which too frequently relieved its monotony.

The members of the Royal Family on whom the tyranny of the King pressed most mercilessly were the two involved in the projected double marriage, the Crown Prince Frederick and his sister Wilhelmine. The unfortunate heir to the throne who excited his father's malevolence was, the Princess emphasises, "the most amiable Prince possible, handsome and well-made. His intellect was superior to his age; and he possessed all the qualities which make a perfect Prince." But his very talents were a crime in his father's eyes, his appreciation of literature, his love of music, his prepossessing appearance, his taste in dress, above all his popularity. The King designed this Prince, brilliant and profound, to submerge all his faculties in the art of drilling; he lost no opportunity of humiliating and torturing his defenceless son whose life was in constant danger; while the known devotion to each other of the brother and sister undoubtedly involved the Princess in the jealous hatred with which the Sovereign regarded his heir.

In that Memoir wherein the Princess vented something of the uncontrollable misery of her existence, she describes how, when the King was suffering from one of his periodical fits of religious mania, "We lived like Trappists, to the great grief of my brother and myself. No one dared laugh or be cheerful in his presence." She relates, too, that, scanty as was the daily allowance of food when they were permitted to partake of it, there were occasions when even this was denied them. When the King, for instance, had a fit of gout, "the pain of which added to his natural violence of disposition," the Princess states:—

> The pains of purgatory could not equal those which we endured. We were obliged to appear at nine o'clock in the morning in his room; we dined there, and did not dare to leave it for a moment. Every day was passed by the King in invectives against my brother and myself. . . . He obliged us to eat and drink the things for which we had an aversion, or which were bad for our healths, which caused us sometimes to bring up in his presence all that was in our stomachs. Every day was marked by some sinister event; and it was impossible

to raise one's eyes without seeing some unhappy people tormented in one way or the other. The King's restlessness did not suffer him to remain in bed : he had himself placed in a chair on rollers, and was thus dragged all over the place : his two arms rested upon crutches which supported them. We always followed his triumphal car, like unhappy captives about to undergo their sentence. . . . We were become as lean as hack-horses from mere want of food.

On another occasion the Princess writes :—

The King almost caused my brother and myself to die of hunger. He always acted as carver, and served everybody except us ; and when by chance there remained anything in a dish, he spat into it in order to prevent our eating of it. We lived entirely upon coffee and milk and dried cherries, which quite ruined my digestion. In return I was nourished with insults and invectives, for I was abused all day long, in every possible manner, and before everybody.

Moreover, this King who, as we are told, would fling plates at his children during meals ; would try to hit them with his crutches, careless whether he killed them or not ; who caned his grown-up son in public till he bled or endeavoured to strangle him with his own hands ; who once, having felled his helpless daughter to the ground, was only with difficulty prevented from kicking her to death—this King, autocrat in the bosom of his affrighted family, did not hesitate in like manner to thrash defenceless prisoners of State who were brought before him, or to belabour the judges of his kingdom and fling them downstairs when they had given a verdict not in accordance with his wishes. " On one occasion," Lavisse relates, " he obtained the reconsideration of a judgment pronounced by one of the Courts by means of blows upon the heads and shoulders of the judges, who ran away spitting out their teeth as they fled, pursued by the King." In short, Lavisse adds :—

No slave-driver, I believe, ever dispensed more blows than this King. Not to mention here his family tragedies, there was no class of his subjects, save the officers, who had not felt the weight of his stick. He beat his servants on the smallest provocation. It was said in Berlin that " he has furnished a

small room with a dozen sticks of great weight, placed at a certain distance apart, so as to be ready for him to seize and apply to whosoever approached him and did not satisfy his every whim." A blow followed every answer he did not like; whether it were really bad, or whether it were so good as to be unanswerable did not signify. He one day met the Potsdam brewer in the street. "Why is your beer so dear?" asks he. "Because I regulate it by the price of Barley. If your Majesty will allow me to get Barley from Stralsund where it is cheap, I can reduce my prices." Nothing could be fairer than that, so the King gives him twenty cuts with his cane.

Once, we are told, Frederick William scaled a living fish and compelled his guests to eat it; another time he beat a doctor who, he decided, took too long to cure one of the Princesses of smallpox; on yet another he threatened that he would send the whole of the medical faculty in Prussia to the fortress of Spandau if they did not within a given time rid him of some blisters on his tongue. Although such incidents may be taken as an indication of insanity, Lavisse insists that in the Royal outbreaks of fury the effects of alcohol were clearly discernible, and he considers that Frederick William was largely responsible for his own bad temper and sufferings.

Be that as it may, it was with this human anomaly, this monster of uncontrollable impulses that the intriguers who surrounded the Prussian throne had to deal; yet the material which they desired to mould was sufficiently plastic if handled with an astuteness devoid of scruple.

"Seckendorf, Grumkow!" exclaims Carlyle, "we have often heard of Devil-diplomatists, and shuddered over horrible pictures of them in novels, hoping it was all fancy; but here actually is a pair of them, transcending all novels; perhaps the highest cognisable fact to be met with in Devil-Diplomacy." "The whole story," sums up Lavisse, "is perhaps that of the greatest network of deception ever conceived."

Such, in brief, was the condition of the negotiations; and such the Court of Berlin—its monarch, its ministers, and the plight of its Royal Family—at the date when George II, fussy, ill-regulated, but withal kindly of heart, ascended the throne

of England with his stately, devoted Queen, and viewed askance the follies of his dissipated heir, Frederick Prince of Wales, the suggested bridegroom of the unhappy Wilhelmine of Prussia.

Queen Sophie doubtless hoped much from her brother's accession to the Crown, but if so she was doomed to disappointment. The project which she had so cherished subsequently made little headway; and George II had already been King for two years and a half when, in despair, the Queen of Prussia dispatched to her sister-in-law the Queen of England, the following curious missive :—

Vous m'avez, ma chère Soeur, toujours tant temoigné souhaiter le Mariage du Prince de Galles, votre fils, avec ma Fille ainée, que je crois bien faire de vous en faire souvenir à present que je crois qu'il serait tems de conclure cette affaire, sur tout puisque je craint que si cela trainoit encore long tems, le Roy ne prit d'autres mesures. Il faurroit pour cet effet la demander sans conditions, et meme le faire entré à cette heure. J'espère que V. Majesté me fera le plaisir de me repondre le plus promtement qu'il sera possible, et qu'Elle sera persuadée du tendre attachement que j'ay pour Elle.

SOPHIE.

De Berlin 17. Dec^re^. 1729.

Je vous prie, ma chere Soeur, d'assurer le Roy mon Frère de mon Zèle parfait.[1]

The language in which this letter was couched was, to say the least, tactless and likely to defeat its ostensible aim. George at once saw in it the handiwork of his brother-in-law of Prussia. The idea that England was thus to be dictated to by Berlin, that she was ordered to beg for the hand of the Princess Wilhelmine "without conditions" was calculated to rouse the ire of his Britannic Majesty. Wherefore, while his Consort returned to her sister-in-law a conventionally civil answer, the appeal of the latter produced exactly the opposite effect to that which its writer had desired. The negotiations proceeded no further, and at length Frederick William, hesitating between different policies, perpetually irritated by his Ministers against England, and fearful of offending the Austrian Emperor, decided to betroth his daughter to one of

[1] Hotham muniments.

two other suitors for her hand whom she particularly disliked—the Margrave of Swedt or the Duke of Weissenfals.

This decision was like a thunderbolt to Queen Sophie, who saw in it the death-blow to her ambitious hopes respecting the English Alliance. She vehemently opposed it, and peremptorily forbade her daughter to consent to either objectionable union. The unfortunate Princess, a mere pawn in the political game, whose personal happiness did not weigh with either parent, found herself buffeted like a shuttlecock between the two, so that, when obedient to one, she excited the wrath of, and was subjected to active ill-treatment by, the other. The dissensions in the Royal Family increased, and the Prince Royal as well as his sister suffered severely. "Not a day passed without some scene or other," the Princess relates tragically. "The King's anger against my brother and myself reached such a pitch that . . . he scarcely allowed us the necessaries of life, and we were tormented with hunger from morning till night. Our only food was coffee and milk, and during dinner and supper-time we were honoured with epithets anything but pleasing."[1]

At length it appeared possible that this unhappy state of affairs might be brought to a termination by an agreement between the King and Queen with regard to a fresh project of marriage which was mooted—an alliance between the Princess and the hereditary Prince of Beireuth. The Queen declared herself willing to consent to this union; and the unfortunate Wilhelmine, worn out with the perpetual dissensions of which she was at once the object and the victim, wearily agreed to submit to an evil the possible extent of which she could not gauge, rather than to one the horror of which appalled her—marriage with a man whom she had never seen to marriage with either of two Princes for whom she entertained a definite aversion. But no sooner had she thus consented to sacrifice herself to the wishes of her mother, than a fresh obstacle was raised by an announcement on the part of the King that if the Princess married thus—as he was pleased to describe it—"*according to her inclinations*, I will give her no trousseau, or dowry or marriage feast."—"What in the world more can I

[1] *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, translated by H.R.H. Princess Christian (1837), pages 89, 90.

do to please you—do you wish to torment me to death?" cried the distracted Queen; while the Princess pointed out to her mother that she could not consent to be turned out of her father's house penniless "like a worthless girl. What will the Prince think whose wife I am destined to be? . . . As soon as you and the King are entirely of one mind as to any particular choice, I will submit blindly, but I cannot do so as things now are." At this the quarrels were renewed with greater violence, the Queen was taken seriously ill in consequence and nearly lost her life, while the Prince Royal wrote to her in "utter despair. The King had so cruelly ill-used him and beaten him, that he thought he would have killed him. He said his patience was at an end, that he was too proud to submit to such treatment, and that if his sufferings were not soon put an end to by England, he would be obliged reluctantly to take other means to find relief. . . . Our grief was indescribable."[1]

At such a crisis Dubourgay, the English Minister at Berlin, and Cnyphausen, the Prussian Minister favourable to his cause, decided to make one last attempt, ere it was too late, to bring about the marriage of the Princess with the Prince of Wales. For this purpose, and with the secret consent and co-operation of the Queen of Prussia, they determined to dispatch "not letters merely but a speaking Messenger to the English Court."[2] This was a British chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Villa, whose function at Berlin was that of English tutor to the Princess Wilhelmine. Devoted to his pupil and to the Queen, cognisant of their unhappy situation, and qualified by his nationality to plead their cause more efficiently than any Prussian Envoy, he seemed an ideal emissary for their purpose. The resolution once taken, not a moment was lost in speeding him on his mission; and, weeping at his separation from his beloved pupil, laden with presents from the Queen to Her Majesty of England, and burdened with loving messages and harrowing representations of their piteous plight, Villa set forth on his errand, "like a Carrier pigeon in extremity."

It so happened that Dr. Villa had been a contemporary at

[1] *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, page 92.

[2] *History of Frederick the Great*, by Thomas Carlyle (Ed. 1858), Chapman and Hall, Vol. II, page 134.

college with Sir Charles Hotham ; and the two men meeting once more at the Court of St. James's renewed their early acquaintance. Dr. Villa doubtless regaled his former friend with a graphic description of his strange experiences at the Court of Berlin, to which Hotham listened with an interest that was shortly to augment. "The English Chaplain," relates Wilhelmine in her Memoirs, "arrived in London. He described our position in such touching terms, and gave so favourable an account of my brother, that the whole nation was won over to us. The Prince of Wales, with whom he had a long conversation, declared to the King his father that he would never marry anyone but myself, and begged him at last to allow the marriage to be solemnised."[1] The argument which Villa meantime presented for the consideration of George II, is still preserved among the Hotham muniments :—

The Paper laid before the Cabinet Council by the Revd. Mr. Villa, being sent over from the Queen of Prussia to His Majesty to represent the state of affairs at the Court of Berlin.

The violent and unheard of insult made by the King of Prussia, upon the Prince & Princess Royal, and bitter reproaches & severe threatenings uttered by him to the Queen herself upon their refusal of coming into the disadvantageous Marriage proposed for the Princess have made such strong Impressions upon the poor Queen, as have entirely broke her health, produced a miscarriage, and put her in great danger of her Life.

This deplorable situation has induced the Friends to her Majesty to send me to England with orders to lay before the King the desolate Condition the Royal Family is in, to implore his favour and beg of him in pure Humanity and christian Compassion to doe something for them that may relieve them in this distress, and as soon as they have some hopes that if His Majesty would but name some Man of Distinction to go immediately to Berlin to treat about the marriage, it might have some good Effect. They beg of him in the most submissive terms to have so much goodness for them ; for though they are not sure it will succeed at present, yet it may hereafter, and will certainly screen them for some time from the extreme violences they have so much reason to apprehend.

[1] *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, page 111.

His Majesty King George, even if irate with his brother-in-law of Prussia, could not ignore such an appeal. The plight of his sister and her unhappy children stirred the element of kindliness which was not lacking in the breast of the narrow, irascible little monarch, and called for immediate action on his part. True, there was but scant love lost between the rulers of England and Prussia. George, when referring to the warlike Frederick William, was wont contemptuously to style him "The Corporal of Potsdam"; Frederick William retaliated by calling his fussy little brother-in-law "*Mon beau-frère, le Comédien!*" Yet so long as George could make advances without any infringement of his own cherished dignity, and if in the process he could obtain definite measure of advantage for himself, he was willing to enlist his sympathies actively on behalf of the victims of Frederick William.

Nevertheless it was obvious the situation demanded exceptional qualifications on the part of whomsoever he entrusted with a mission of such delicacy. It called for pride in the emissary of Great Britain—personal and national pride, above all pride on behalf of that august King, his master, that not one iota of the Majesty of England should suffer diminution at the hands of this delegate; it required, further, an honour which was unimpeachable, an astuteness wellnigh infallible—in brief, loyalty, diplomacy and integrity warranted not to fail in the most difficult emergency.

George cast his eyes about his Court to discover the "Man of Distinction" worthy to be entrusted with that precious mission of sustaining his dignity at the Court of Prussia, and decided that nowhere could he find one more qualified for his purpose than Sir Charles Hotham. Of ancient family and unblemished record, a courtier, and a soldier from his earliest manhood, as we have seen Hotham was of striking appearance, polished manners, and noted for his learning and accomplishments. He was, moreover, as his father had enviously remarked, a particularly good linguist; while the fact that he was likewise the brother-in-law of Lord Chesterfield, now Minister at The Hague and a man of Continental celebrity, was calculated to enhance his prestige abroad. Wherefore, as Wilhelmine points out, "the King named the 'Knight

Hotham ' as his Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Berlin " ; and Carlyle further sums up the new Ambassador's qualifications for the task :—

The special Envoy to be sent to Berlin on this interesting occasion is a dignified Yorkshire Baronet ; Sir Charles Hotham. " Colonel of the Horse-Grenadiers " ; he has some post at Court too, and is still in his best years. His wife is Chesterfield's sister ; he is withal a kind of soldier, as we see ;—a man of many sabre-tashes, at least, and acquainted with Cavalry-drill, as well as the practices of Gold-sticks : his father was a General-Officer in the Peterborough-Spanish Wars. These are his eligibilities, recommending him at Berlin, and to Official men at home. Family is old enough : Hothams of Scarborough [*sic*] in the East Riding ; old as *Wilhelmus Bastardus* ; and subsists to our own day. . . . For the rest a handsome figure prompt in French, and much the Gentleman.[1]

Forthwith George, through his Minister Townshend,[2] proceeded to ply his Ambassador Extraordinary with his Royal wishes respecting the conduct of the mission with which the latter was to be entrusted. In a document of many pages the Envoy is put *au fait* of the entire political situation, and of all matters then at issue between England and Prussia, being further provided with copies of the correspondence which had passed between the two Queens. A second document, five pages in length, safeguards still more zealously that dignity of which George is so tenacious. Hotham is therein directed on arriving at Berlin to place himself entirely under the guidance of the friendly " Sieur Cnyphausen, Minister of State," and to be ruled by the latter in all he is to say and do, " as well as in the manner and time of saying it." He is furnished with innumerable comfortable and tender messages for the Queen and her family, but is not to see any of them till such time as Cnyphausen shall deem it politic for him to risk taking such a step. Above all, he is to make it clear to this Minister that His Britannic Majesty, in consenting to these advances through his representative, is acting with incredible condescension.

[1] *History of Frederick the Great*, by Thomas Carlyle (ed. 1858), Vol. II, page 217.

[2] Charles, 2nd Viscount Townshend, Secretary of State.

Hotham is to assure the Minister on behalf of the King his master—

. . . of the confidence We place in his Abilities & good Intentions and that We could not give him a greater proof of Our Esteem for him and of the Regard We pay to his Advice, than in sending you to Berlin, which nothing but what the Sieur Villa said in his name on the Subject of your present Commission could have prevailed on Us to have done at this Juncture.

You will let this said Sieur Cnyphausen know that the Behaviour of Our Brother the King of Prussia towards Us has been such that it was with difficulty We could bring ourself to send you to Berlin upon the foot [*sic*] he proposed of treating upon the Contents of so unreasonable a letter as that which the King of Prussia obliged Our Dear Sister to write the 17th of December last to Our Dearest Consort. . . .[1]

The missive then proceeds to deal with the crucial point in the proposed negotiations—the rock upon which it was possible that they might split.

The King of Prussia, as has already been stated, had long shown himself willing for the marriage of Wilhelmine to the Prince of Wales ; that was a matter in which great issues for the Court of Berlin were not involved, and, since the Princess must needs wed some Prince of suitable rank, the English alliance promised a provision for her future at which Frederick William could not look askance. But the marriage of the Prince Royal with a Princess of England was a far other matter. If such a union were permitted to take place, it meant, in the present, a certain measure of protection for the son-in-law of the King of England, it meant recognising the manhood, strengthening the power and importance of that heir whom Frederick William hated, that victim whom as yet he could torture with impunity ; it meant for the future a close alliance between a reigning Sovereign of Prussia and the Court of England—the enemy of Austria. Frederick William, the tool of unscrupulous Ministers and his own evil passions, disliked the prospect thus presented both in the present and the future, and was minded to permit the marriage of his daughter, and to forbid the marriage of his son. George, whose principal

[1] Hotham muniments.

object was to bind the interests of Prussia with those of England, and to enlist on his own behalf the gratitude of the future Sovereign of that country, was equally minded to achieve both marriages or consent to none at all.

To this end Hotham was directed to inform the amiable Cnyphausen firmly on behalf of the Majesty of England that "*We shall never by any means be prevailed upon to agree to the first Match without concluding the second at the same time.*" After which the letter points out with extreme frankness :—

It is to be hoped that the Errand you go upon will procure you an easy access to the King of Prussia, and all manner of civil treatment from him. But if He should fly out at any time into Expressions not becoming our Minister to bear, you will support Our Honour and Dignity with Resolution and Firmness.

In view of such instructions, it is entertaining to observe that at the same date Reichenbach, the Prussian spy at the Court of St. James, is describing in somewhat similar terms the comportment of His Majesty of England for the benefit of His Majesty of Prussia :—

On sçait d'une bonne main que le Roy d'Angleterre s'emporte quelque fois extrement, et apelle en presence propre le Chevalier Walpole et my Ld Townshend *Coquins, Cujons,* (cochons), *Diable vous emporte, allez vous en,* etc. etc.[1]

Hotham, in short, considering the nature of the monarch whom he represented, and the monarch to whom he was to make representations, had no enviable task, all the more that the Royal instructions of which he was the mouthpiece were designed to convey a covert threat from one Sovereign to the other. For the document of instructions concluded with the hope that the sending of Sir Charles at this juncture " may be the means of inducing the King of Prussia to quit the measures he is at present engaged in with the Emperor, and to join the Allies of Hanover " ; and in this " to act a part so agreeable to his own true interests " ; but if this sensible course is not

[1] It is known on the best authority that the King of England flies into violent passions, and calls the Chevalier Walpole and my Lord Townshend, even to their faces, "*Rascals, Swine, Devil take you, Be off with you!*" etc. etc.

adopted by Frederick William the missive indicates that all such friendly advances on the part of England are made with claws ungloved to scratch :—

But you must take care, as from yourself, & in confidence to make the said Sieur Cnyphausen sensible that the Affairs of Europe are at present in so great a crisis, and that the King of Prussia, by the number of his Troops and by the Warlike preparations He has made, is become of so much Consequence, that it will be impossible for the Allies of Hanover to wait the issue of a long and tedious negociation, in order to know what part his Prussian Majesty will take.

For Her Majesty of Prussia, however, Hotham is entrusted with a loving letter from King George to his sister :—

Madame ma Sœur,

Ayant chargé le Sieur Charles Hotham, Chevalier Baronet, d'une Commission aupres de mon bon Frère le Roy votre Epoux, qui vous sera fort agréable, Je ne doute pas que Votre Majesté ne l'écoute avec plaisir, et ne luy donne une Créance entière quand il vous assura en mon nom combien j'ay à cœur vos Interets at ceux de votre Famille, et avec Quelle tendresse Je suis

Madame ma Sœur
Votre très affectionné Frère
George R.

A S[t] James le 5m Mars $\frac{1729}{30}$.[1]

So Hotham, well-primed, set forth upon his journey ; and with his departure Reichenbach, the Prussian spy at the Court of St. James, wrote regretfully to the Devil-Diplomatist, Grumkow, at the Court of Berlin—"*Ce grand Oracle est un homme fort joli.*" Lest therefore the dangerous fascination of the emissary, and his supposed importance as "*le beau-frère de Milord Chesterfield*" should weigh too seriously with His Majesty of Prussia, Reichenbach, at the instigation of Grumkow, prepared a counterblast. "The time has now come when Reichenbach must play his game," wrote Grumkow on March 4th in cipher to his tool at the English Court ; and

[1] Hotham muniments.

ten days later he adds—"*Reichenbach will tell his Prussian Majesty what Grumkow finds fit.*"

This news of the Court of England, concocted by Grumkow in Berlin, may be summarised as follows: Reichenbach, the faithful servant of His Prussian Majesty, devoutly hoped that that great and good monarch would not allow himself to be duped by the wiles of his enemies. The nefarious design of St. James's was to reduce Prussia to the position of a province dependent upon England. When once the Princess Royal of England should be wedded to the Prince Royal of Prussia, the English by that means would form such a powerful party at Berlin that they would altogether "tie his Prussian Majesty's hands." If, lamented Reichenbach, the beloved King but knew the truly base schemes of England which were concealed beneath this apparently harmless mission of Hotham, how that good monarch would be on his guard! But Prussia was in serious danger of being innocently made the catspaw of Britain, and the despicable intrigues involved in this affair were truly inconceivable.

A Person whose word is above suspicion [writes Reichenbach] told me the other day that the King [of England] pacing his apartment, exclaimed—"What will the world think of me sending this man to Berlin?" To which the Queen replied that it was better to think of the future than the present—when the English Princess will be with the Prince—*the King of Prussia,* that is the great object![1]

Dexterously indeed did Reichenbach play upon the foibles of the credulous King, instilling into the mind of that choleric Corporal of Potsdam the belief that England was only looking forward to the day when the Prince, *a son-in-law of King George,* with his Consort, *an English Princess,* would be seated on the throne of Prussia, which would then be a tributary to Great Britain. And further to implant the idea that the Queen of Prussia and her family were covertly in league with England, he retailed with zest his discovery that the new Minister was secretly taking a magnificent present from the Queen of England to the Queen of Prussia, a toilet-set of gold. "But the King (George) has implored and commanded that this fact

[1] Hotham muniments.

should be concealed from Reichenbach ! " he adds significantly. " The Minister is taking other presents, but of what these consist I have not been able to discover, and I have been told to be most cautious not to let out to a soul that I know anything of the matter. The Minister is ordered privately to stop two days in Hanover in case he does not, on first arriving, find a courier from DuBourgay or the Queen."[1]

But besides thus cunningly rousing the ire of the weak monarch, Reichenbach was determined to diminish the supposed lustre of the Ambassador Extraordinary in the eyes of Frederick William by insinuating that the King of England in his choice of deputy had done but scanty honour to Prussia. On March 24th Reichenbach wrote a sarcastic letter to Grumkow which may be translated as follows :—

Respecting the qualifications of this new Minister, it seems to Reichenbach that he has drawn a sufficiently accurate portrait of his person in saying that he would pass for a man of polish but of little experience, and that Lord Townshend, when this new Minister deprecated his little capacity, assured him that he was going to a Court where all would be plain sailing, since there was so formidable a party for the Court of London, who would ply him with all necessary information ; and that even M. Reichenbach had told the King of Prussia that he was sold in Berlin by the partisans of a man to whom nothing could be denied, and who knew how to gain all hearts ; a state of affairs which seems incredible here, where *ce grand Oracle* is of so little importance that no one had even heard of his existence till he was named Ambassador !

Few things, indeed, could be better calculated to wound the vanity of the Corporal of Potsdam than the clever insinuation that *Ce grand Oracle*, the *beau-frère* of my Lord Chesterfield, on whom he and his people were prepared to look with awe, was in truth a man of no importance in the country whence he came ; that even the great Lord Chesterfield himself, from whom the " Knight Hotham " derived an additional lustre, occupied in his native land a position far other than that which the Continental Powers ignorantly assigned to him. The letter of March 27th, in which Reichenbach reiterates this idea, is best given in the original :—

[1] Hotham muniments.

Ce grand Oracle est arrivé à Berlin, dont on n'a pas sçu icy s'il existait dans le Monde ou non ; et à la Cour on fait d'abord un bruit de luy comme d'un autre Alexandre ; c'est une affaire bien étrange qu'on à une idée trop petite icy, des Allemands, et que nous autres Allemands avons une Idée trop vaste et magnifique des Anglois, et croyons que c'est un Ange même qui vient ; par exemple, Ld Chesterfield passe icy pour un bon homme, qui est en credit aupres de Sa Majesté Britannique, mais on n'à pourtant une Idée si extraordinaire de lui icy, comme on à de lui en Allemagne.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEVIL-DIPLOMATISTS

THUS it was to such a hot-bed of intrigue, and to deal with such a Monarch of Moods and his Devil-Diplomatists that Hotham was sent—a proud, straightforward, incorruptible Englishman.

To-day that mission on which he was dispatched—with all the anxiety and diplomacy it entailed, the sharp encounter of brilliant wits, the fierce antagonism of stubborn wills, all the hundred and one influences at work, crossing and re-crossing each other in tireless conflict—all this finds its sole tangible result in three packets of yellowing papers which lie amongst the Hotham muniments. Some of these, indeed, have duplicates in other archives ; some are unique ; all are scored and re-scored by the hand of the transcriber, who laboriously translated their once mysterious cypher into a language legible to the uninitiated. In their pages simple numerals represent the august Kings of Prussia and England, their Consorts, their Ministers. Reichenbach, the spy, writes of himself in the third person, an innocent unknown, entitled *Nostri ;* other personalities are equally concealed and revealed by the respective cunning of the original writer and his translator ; but by whom the cypher was invented or by whom the key to its secret was obtained none may say.

Yet so it is that those yellowing papers are endowed for us with a curious magic. Reading them, out of the silence of the grave there springs once more to life that little Court of long ago, with all its petty troublous existence resuscitated. We are in the midst of it—the babel of tongues, the clash of schemes, the intrigues, the lying, the heart-burnings, the heart-breakings, the note of vice triumphant, the plaint of integrity oppressed. Once more the puppets strut across the stage, once

more each plays his appointed part—that rôle apportioned to him by Fate—so all-important then, so piteously insignificant now after the lapse of nigh upon two centuries. We watch that King of Moods, that Queen of Plots ; that wan, handsome Prince ; that Princess with her tortured brain and failing health ; those diplomatists pursuing their eternal game of chance, toiling warily along a treacherous road, with dazzling heights above and a bottomless pit beneath. We see the tall grenadiers shouldering arms ; piff, puff go the guns, the game of mimic warfare echoes noisily through the busy kingdom ; the undercurrent of statecraft progresses silently. And still, with the wisdom of the centuries, we see how the aim of each human unit is for Self ; how that King of it all, that autocrat of cudgels and fisticuffs, is but a madman, the dupe of every unscrupulous knave, a monarch of thunder—crowned with a fool's cap.

The letters of Hotham, in which he describes his mission and all which befell him in that infantine kingdom of Prussia, afford in much a striking contrast to the other documents among which they are immersed. Through the tortuous intrigues of his opponents, through the timorous championship of his supporters, his narrative darts like a gleaming shuttle, direct, unwavering, carrying with it an unbroken thread of statement, fearless, uncompromising, exact. His private correspondence and his dispatches alike show him to be a loyal subject, a staunch friend, an excellent hater ; too proud to be a sycophant, too sincere to be a diplomatist. They show that, through all the intricacies of his negotiation, never once did he stoop to court those Devil-Diplomatists whom he despised ; and that, from the outset, he was minded to risk the success of his undertaking rather than the integrity of his conduct.

Whether he was at first aware of the extent to which the forces of his antagonists were leagued in opposition to him, is doubtful ; that he anticipated counterplots from Grumkow and his faction is evident, but he can scarcely, when setting forth upon his mission, have fathomed the extent to which the mind of Frederick William had been deliberately poisoned against him. It was not long, however, before he was to discover that the task he had undertaken was far less simple

than Lord Chesterfield and Lord Townshend had led him to believe.

After a tedious journey, rendered all the more wearisome by the badness of the roads consequent upon an abnormal fall of rain, he reached Hanover on March 28th, 1730 (New Style) ; and a few hours after his arrival there came to him Captain Guy Dickens, the secretary of Dubourgay, British Minister at the Court of Berlin. A brisk, shrewd soldier, fearless and honourable, Captain Dickens was a man on whose word Hotham could rely ; moreover, well versed in the diplomatic situation at Berlin, he was a warm though secret supporter of Queen Sophie, at whose express commands he now hastened to see the British Envoy, bearing, unfortunately, information which was far from reassuring.

By what he told me (wrote Hotham to England the next day), I own the account is by no means so favourable a one as I expected ; it amounting to no more than that the present good humour of the King of Prussia is owing, in all appearance, to his being persuaded that I am only to treat upon the single marriage ; neither do I find that Mr. Cnyphausen has at all gained ground upon Grumkow and that party, but is only willing to help to facilitate matters.

Wherefore, since the unfortunate Queen of Prussia considered that the most urgent object of the Ambassador's mission was to mitigate the sufferings of herself and her family, she implored Hotham for the present to suppress the fact that he had come to negotiate on behalf of both marriages, and not solely, as Frederick William fondly imagined, respecting that of Wilhelmine with the Prince of Wales. To this Hotham could only consent in as far as his instructions permitted ; but it undoubtedly increased the difficulty of his mission that he had to keep in view two opposing aims—the mandates of his master and the happiness of his master's sister. Princess Wilhelmine in her Memoirs thus relates the commencement of the negotiations :—

The Queen was still ill, and her great weakness prevented her leaving her bed. She was much pleased at Hotham's mission. So soon as he arrived in Berlin, he demanded an audience of the King for which purpose he was at once sum-

moned to Charlottenburg. [At eleven o'clock on the morning following his arrival.] The Queen sent some trusty friends there to keep her informed of all that took place. Hotham made a formal proposal for my hand. He told my father that his King and master and the whole nation were convinced that, after giving him this proof of their confidence, the King would not refuse his consent to the marriage of the Crown Prince. At any rate, people in England would be quite satisfied if my wedding took place first, and they left it free to the King to decide as to the time when the Crown Prince's should be celebrated. My father was enchanted, embraced the Envoy over and over again, and gave him endless assurances of his friendship.

It is probable that matters did not progress so far as Wilhelmine was given to understand ; but even if the reported embraces showered by her father upon the Ambassador Extraordinary never took place, Hotham unquestionably found the redoubtable Corporal of Potsdam all good humour and gracious condescension. Unwieldy in person, bluff in manner and blunt in speech, Frederick William could nevertheless recognise that there were occasions when he must discard his rôle of official bully ; his greeting, therefore, of this English Ambassador, respecting whom he harboured the strongest suspicions, was amazingly affable. He read the King of England's protestations of friendship with assumed satisfaction, and although the audience lasted only a quarter of an hour, it passed off in unbroken harmony, His Prussian Majesty finally informing the Envoy that there was nothing upon earth he desired more than a " perfect friendship and correspondence with His Majesty of England."

After that (relates Hotham in his subsequent dispatch) we went to dinner, where His Majesty was pleased to make both himself and the company inordinately drunk. The company consisted of General Grumkow, Seckendorf, Borch, Cnyphausen and several other foreign Ministers and persons of distinction. The King of Prussia in his Cupps begun his Majesty's health, the Queen's and to the Royal Marriage and good Union of the two familys. I observed that it had been strongly insinuated to him that the marriage of the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal his daughter was the only Pur-

port of my Commission, and tho' I took frequent opportunities of insinuating to him that I begged to know what his Prussian Majesty's intentions & propositions were upon the subject, that I might transmitt the same to His Majesty, yet I could at that time get no other answer than that on Saturday I should be acquainted with them, and therefore in the good Humour he was in, I did not think it proper then to urge Matters further to him.

All, indeed, was uproarious merriment at that banquet. The lean dishes of pot-herbs and water which too often formed the sole diet of the starving Royal household were now replaced by savoury meats of ample abundance; servants, magnificently dressed, paced the gaily-lighted apartments—for once regal splendour prevailed in the Royal Palace. And beneath the genial glow of that unwonted festivity, "in his cupps," Frederick William threw discretion to the winds. He sent for a large glass and proposed the health of his "dear son-in-law, the Prince of Wales." All present instantly rose from their seats and congratulated him. "This expression of sympathy touched him so much that he had tears in his eyes,"[1] and those of his Ministers who were favourable to the project wept in sympathy. "Grumkow and Seckendorf meanwhile were thunderstruck, and had the greatest trouble to hide their dismay";[2] but, profoundly upset as was the former, it was not till the departure of a post on April 8th that he was able to inform his accomplice Reichenbach of the sinister turn which events had unexpectedly taken.

I returned dead drunk from Charlottenburg as the post was leaving, and I was not in a condition to write. The audience did not last more than a quarter of an hour, and after having read the letter from the King of England, the Master said to Seckendorf and his Friend, "This speaks only in general terms of blood-relationship, and of the Marriage, and I think it is humbug." At table there were witticisms to the effect that *a German Ducat was worth as much as an English Ducat, and that All well and good to marry a daughter, but it was not necessary for that to marry a son also*—and other *picoteries*. But you would have fallen from the skies when all

[1] *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, pages 111–12.
[2] *Ibid.*

at once the King announced that the Princess was promised to the Prince of Wales, and His Majesty received the congratulations of all at table ; Borch cried with joy. The King was dead drunk and Dubourgay and Hotham, who appeared in no hurry to offer their congratulations, *affectèrent un grand froid.* At the close the drinking was terrible, and the King returned much inconvenienced to Potsdam ; but the next morning he caused to be conveyed to the company who had been at Charlottenburg, that they had better not mention what had taken place ; and Hotham had a grand conference with Cnyphausen and Borch, but as they cannot so far agree about conditions, he has sent a Courier to get fresh Instructions. In short, no one has ever witnessed such a Scene ! . . . Personally I am distracted at all this.

The news, indeed, rushed through Berlin, and became, as Hotham relates, " the discourse of the whole Town. The Queen was informed of the glad tidings, and gave herself up to a transport of delight ; while the Princess Wilhelmine, seated quietly in her own room working, was suddenly astounded by the door being flung open and a deputation of more than thirty ladies, gentlemen and servants invading her solitude " who," she describes, " bending one knee before me, according to the English fashion, wished me joy." Thus eagerly presenting their congratulations, her visitors vociferously hailed her as Princess of Wales ; but Wilhelmine received these demonstrations apathetically since, as she points out, she knew too well the character of her father to be either greatly perturbed or elated at a rumour which was not yet confirmed by the autocrat in whose hands lay her fate.

Meanwhile Hotham was not less embarrassed than his enemies at the unexpected turn which events had taken. His Majesty of Prussia had jumped to conclusions for the erroneous nature of which it might well be that the Ambassador Extraordinary would be held responsible. Small wonder that he and Cnyphausen offered no congratulations to swell the drunken merriment of Frederick William, and were coldly unresponsive in the midst of the tipsy, uproarious Court. Indeed, when his own account of what had occurred reached St. James's, it was at once recognised that Frederick William having thus announced one marriage and not two, greatly

lessened the prospect of any happy conclusion to the negotiations. This being so—Reichenbach sarcastically informed Grumkow—the intelligence occasioned universal dismay.

The last Courier whom Hotham sent hither from Berlin has caused the greatest consternation in London. The Queen in consequence succumbed to an attack of gout, and still is carried on a sofa to any Assembly, and the Princess Amelia was *tellement incommodée* that she took to her bed for several days. For instead of what they had flattered themselves here in London, that they would receive tidings of the fulfilment of their wishes, they learnt that there were yet plenty of obstacles to be overcome in Berlin before they could force the King of Prussia to consent to give the Prince Royal to the Princess Amelia ; and only the day before yesterday Broglie said to Reichenbach that the one marriage would never take place without the other, so if the King remains firm, we shall see some fine sport.[1]

But little did George trouble that his Queen, as a result of the news from Berlin, had to be borne upon a litter in public, or that his daughter, overcome with spleen, had taken to her bed. One consideration alone weighed with the Sovereign of England, his Ambassador had ably supported his dignity under exceptionally trying circumstances, and His Majesty pronounced himself satisfied. Lord Townshend at once wrote to that effect to the anxious Envoy:—

The King very much commended your conduct. . . . His Majesty was very well pleased with your keeping your temper as you did when the King of Prussia in so surprising a manner & without any grounds from what you had said declared a marriage to be concluded between the Prince of Wales and his daughter. The Conference you had with the Ministers upon that subject, of which you give an account in yours of the 18th, was very dry and formal, as likewise the other which you mention . . . but the answers you made to their instances were very right and proper, & his Majesty observed with great satisfaction that you had been so dexterous as to let the King of Prussia feel, *without opening yourself*, that it was the King's fixt resolution to have both Matches concluded at one & the same Time.

[1] Translation from the Hotham muniments.

But as we have to do with a Prince of so variable a temper & of so unaccountable a way of proceeding as the King of Prussia, I can only give you his Majesty's thoughts in as explicit Terms as I am able. . . .

You have had the King's entire approbation hitherto, I make no question that the same good Judgment will lead you to deserve his Majesty's farther Commendation of your Prudence, Ability & Success in executing his Commands.

Long ere these letters reached Hotham, however, the aspect of affairs at Berlin had changed. Frederick William, as soon as the fumes of that debauch at Charlottenburg had cleared from his befogged brain, reflected with alarm on the precipitancy of his action. "The first thing I heard next day," wrote Hotham to Lord Townshend on April 12th, "was that his Prussian Majesty, being sensible when he was sober that he had gone too far, had sent orders to his Ministers to repeat nothing of what had passed the day before upon Pain of his Displeasure; and I leave your Lordship to judge how practicable that was in the company of sixteen to eighteen people and as many servants!"—Later, Hotham added:—

The King came to Town that Night alone, in extreme bad Humour, as I was informed by People of good Credit, possibly from being sensible that he had gone too far at Charlottenbourg. (*In cypher.*) He was not at all gracious to the Queen, and a person told me, who saw the Letter, that the Prince Royal had writ to his sister from Potsdam, that the King had been in extreme bad Temper for these two or three Days past, and had left him behind at Potsdam, *de peur que le vent Anglais ne le touchât.*

On Sunday, which was the next Day after his Prussian Majesty arrived, I went to the Parade, where, contrary to my Expectation, he received me very graciously, and invited me to dinner; and finding a favourable opportunity, I desired he would permit me to speak to him in private, which he readily granted.

In this interview, Hotham endeavoured diplomatically to point out that whatever passed in the matter of the negotiations was invariably "known by the whole town an hour after," and therefore he humbly besought His Majesty, that in the discussion of these "domestick Affairs," and "as I

should speak with less reserve to him, to permit me to treat with his Majesty alone." To this the King replied, with more politeness than accuracy, that "*Quand on était raisonnable avec lui, il serait raisonnable de son côté*";[1] and in response to Hotham's invitation to make any propositions with regard to the matter under discussion—"*Qu'il y songerait, et qu'il songerait meurement.*"[2] But, Hotham concludes ominously, "I know that Grumkow was with him soon afterwards"; and the result of the Minister's influence was soon to be apparent.

Grumkow, in truth, at this juncture, might well have considered his position desperate. His back was against the wall; he was fighting, not only for all which made life palatable, but for life itself. Frederick William, self-constituted supreme Magistrate of Prussia, had a short way with those who fell from his favour; and Grumkow, conscious of double-dealing, might well have trembled at this knowledge, had he not gauged with unerring accuracy the power of his wit when pitted against that of his Royal master. In truth, neither Frederick William with his besotted intellect, nor the "Knight Hotham" with his rigid integrity was likely to prove a match for the cunning of Grumkow. In Hotham, the Prussian Minister had speedily recognised not merely a political antagonist, but an enemy so frank that he did not trouble to disguise his enmity. Hotham, he likewise discovered, was not to be bought. The Englishman resisted all the friendly advances of Grumkow, he refused Grumkow's proferred hospitality, he responded coldly to the oily speeches of the diplomatist. He had, moreover, shown himself the adherent of Cnyphausen. How far in this Hotham acted wisely, whether it would have been more diplomatic to conciliate the wily Minister and fight him with his own weapons—whether a man of less sincerity than Hotham would have been better equipped to deal with the tortuous network of Prussian politics—is difficult to say. Queen Caroline, from England, urged in regard to the Prussian Minister that Hotham and Dubourgay ought to "*gain the Knave*," but there is no instance of Hotham having stooped

[1] That when people were reasonable with him, he, on his side, was likewise reasonable.

[2] That he would think it over, and think hard.

to follow this advice, as is sufficiently evinced by Grumkow's own correspondence. " Reichenbach has depicted Hotham to perfection ! " wrote that Minister angrily to his accomplice ; " his manners are extremely haughty and impertinent, and I cannot sufficiently admire the patience of the brother-in-law of the King of England to be able to endure them while awaiting the conclusion of this affair ! " Hotham, on his side, with an accuracy equal to Grumkow's own, had taken the measure of his antagonist. In a letter dated the 18th April, 1730, he writes :—

Grumkow knows every word that passes at the Conferences, and has already been playing tricks with me. . . . Grumkow is ever at the King's elbow. I meet every day with fresh instances of his Power, and there is hardly a Person who is often about the King that is not either in his pay or Seckendorf's. Upon my arrival he made a great many advances and Professions of Service, but meeting with no other Returns but Personal Civilities, and seeing me embarked with Cnyphausen, he has since set all his Engines to work to prepossess the King against me.

Never, was the arch-intriguer determined, should Wilhelmine sit upon the throne of England, never should an English Princess rule in Prussia. The downfall of Cnyphausen was to be brought about ; the defeat of that insolent " beau-frère of milord Chesterfield." To the onlooker of a later generation, who can watch each movement of both players, that game between the astute Prussian and the Englishman with " *les manières fort hautaines et impertinentes* " is one of absorbing interest, all the more that at this juncture each antagonist believed himself secure in a measure which would inevitably checkmate his opponent. We will first glance at the scheme of Grumkow.

While negotiations were apparently progressing favourably, with feverish energy he had been plying Reichenbach with material whereby to frustrate the plans of England. His accomplice was directed to furnish him, for use in Berlin, with every available scandal against the Prince of Wales, with every trivial gossip disadvantageous to the King and Queen of England, with any news, true or untrue, which would serve to portray in lurid colours the miserable existence that

awaited a Prussian Princess amid such surroundings. He even strove to rouse the animosity of England against the match. In a letter designed for Reichenbach to show in England, he described the Queen of Prussia as " frantic to get rid of the Princess Royal, who has become thin, ugly, and spotty," a description obviously calculated to affright the fastidious, pleasure-loving Prince of Wales, and unjustifiable, in that, although Wilhelmine, starved, harassed and perpetually tormented in mind and body, was probably at this period reduced to a state of health detrimental to her appearance, there is ample evidence that she was far from unattractive in person. But the trump-card of Grumkow lay in his ability to whisper in the ear of Frederick William the warning that Hotham had come to arrange *two marriages*, not one, as His Majesty fondly imagined; that he could urge the King, before proceeding further with the negotiations, to insist upon a clear understanding on this point —a point which Hotham was not prepared to elucidate. The Envoy thus found himself thrust into an unpleasant predicament. Still forced, on the one hand, to safeguard the Queen and her family from fresh violence by keeping the Autocrat of Prussia in a good humour, he was, on the other, still expressly forbidden by his instructions from England to give any false assent to those particular wishes of that Sovereign which alone could ensure such a result. In despair and anxiety, therefore, he dispatched a messenger to St. James's begging for further commands, and explaining that he had been grievously " pushed home " upon this subject.

Meantime Hotham's counter-move was, nevertheless, sufficiently potent, and one which he fondly believed would change the aspect of the conflict and place the winning stakes in his hands. The secret correspondence of Grumkow and the mysterious *Nostri* had been intercepted in England ; certain of the letters had been deciphered, and while the originals were dispatched to their destination in order that the intriguers should not be put on their guard by any knowledge of the discovery, copies of the incriminating correspondence had been transmitted to the British Envoy at Berlin wherewith to encompass the downfall of his foes and to further the cause of the negotiations.

The valuable part of this discovery was the proof thereby afforded that the news from England communicated by Reichenbach to the Court of Prussia had first been manufactured by Grumkow in Berlin:—

These Letters (wrote Townshend) will furnish you sufficiently with Particulars of the villainous part which Reichenbach acts towards the King his Master, & towards his Ma^ty^ & the whole Royal family of England; & will enable You to shew the King of Prussia that he forms his Dispatches to him not upon what really passes in England, but upon what is suggested to him from some Persons at Berlin. And in case you find that your representations make some impression, You may then, to fortify what you have said, & as a farther proof of the truth of your Assertions, venture to insinuate to his Prussian Majesty what will, *by directions from Berlin,* be the subject of Reichenbach's next Dispatches & mention to him the several points upon which Grumkow has directed him to write . . . & you may beg of his Prussian Majesty to observe whether what you foretell as to the Contents of his subsequent Dispatches do not prove true.

Under these circumstances it was obviously of importance that the purport of the incriminating communications should be made known to the Prussian King before the arrival of Reichenbach's next letter from St. James's. Frederick William would then be in a position to gauge the extent to which he was being duped; and it was but reasonable to conclude that that choleric monarch on finding himself the puppet of unscrupulous schemers—who, moreover, did not hesitate to speak of him in contemptuous terms—would show scanty mercy to the delinquents.

Great, therefore, was the mortification of Hotham to discover that the first checkmate to this admirable plan came from the avowed adherent to the cause of England; for when, in accordance with the instructions of Townshend, he placed the correspondence in the hands of Cnyphausen, that Minister proved too timid to sanction any immediate use being made of them.

He even told me, himself (writes Hotham on April 12th, in extreme annoyance) that the whole Court was sold to the (Austrian) Emperor, and I saw plainly that he stands in such

Awe of the King, that he will never venture to lead his Master into anything which he does not see the King already disposed to do. It is certain that the few friends we have are timorous and indolent, and our Enemys enterprizing and active.

Forced thus unwillingly to delay action, Hotham, however, determined to strengthen his hands against the happy moment when he would be able to strike. He at once foresaw that the defence proffered by the intriguers would be that the copied letters were forgeries ; the documents had reached him about April 11th, and in his letter to Lord Townshend on April 18th, wherein he described the manner in which Grumkow had been manœuvring against him, he added feelingly :—

As I should be glad therefore before I leave this Place to do him also some Service in my turn, I beg your Lordship would, if you think it convenient, stop an original letter of his to Reichenbach whenever you can meet with one strong enough to break his neck, and upon a proper occasion I shall with great pleasure put it with the rest myself into the King's hands.

Meantime the tide of the negotiations with regard to the proposed alliance ebbed and flowed continuously. Frederick William inclined first to this course, then to that. One day he lent a willing ear to the insinuations of Grumkow and Seckendorf ; another, he recognised the advantages which might accrue from the proposals of England. At length he made an entirely novel proposition to Hotham which the latter forthwith transmitted to St. James's. His Prussian Majesty, he relates :—

Having sent for Messrs Borch & Cnyphausen after I had my audience the Day before Yesterday, He told them that he very well understood by me "*Que j'en voulois au Double Marriage.*" That it was a very advantageous Proposal for his daughter, but that as to his Son, he did not see any reason if he gave him, why something might not be stipulated to the advantage of his Family, pointing at Berges and Jülich. He even went further, and said—"If they have a mind to detach me from the (Austrian) Emperor, why don't they make some proposals ? "

[*In cipher.*] The King this morning in discourse upon these matters with one Marshall, his private Secretary, who is in our

Interest and a creature of Cnyphausen, said to him that, for his part *he hated his Son, and he knew his Son hated him.* Therefore if the King our Master would make his Son Stadtholder of Hanover he would consent to the two marriages being concluded at the same time. . . . *It is very plain that he will sell his Son, but not give him,* and therefore his Majesty is best Judge what terms to offer . . . if no prospect of Advantage be in View, it will be impossible to bring the King of Prussia to reason on that Head, considering the excessive Jealousy and Avarice of his Temper.

Although these remarks were carefully concealed in cipher, one can only marvel at the temerity which could give frank expression to them in those days of espionage, and at a moment, moreover, when it might be supposed that the writer would have had this danger specially present to his thoughts owing to his knowledge of the fashion in which the correspondence of the Prussian intriguers had been deciphered by his own Government. For despite of this, George of England, as well as his Ambassador, had his own little counter-plot whereby he designed to circumvent the manœuvres of his ostensibly friendly antagonist.

Hotham was directed by Lord Townshend to secure privately from the Prince Royal "a strong and positive assurance in writing under his hand," first, that after his marriage with the Princess Amelia, the Prince would, as soon as his uncle sent for him, leave Hanover, and repair with his Princess to England, where he was to remain indefinitely, for any length of time which the King, his uncle, might wish. Secondly, that since King George would be put to additional expenses for the maintenance of the said Prince and Princess during this period, Frederick must engage to refund to his uncle this outlay, as soon as he was in a position to do so.

The cunning requires no comment with which *le petit Comédien,* while preparing outwardly to concede every request of his brother-in-law of Prussia, was secretly designing to render all such apparent concessions a negligible quantity. Nevertheless Hotham, for the present, was unable to carry out the plans of his Royal master. So far, the Envoy explained, he had not even ventured to see the Queen, the Prince, or the Princess of Prussia. The greatest caution was

necessary lest Frederick William should imagine that the Ambassador from England was carrying on any intrigue with the members of the Royal Family, all the more that, since the unfortunate Prince had acquired importance in the eyes of Europe by reason of these negotiations for his marriage which emphasised his manhood, the mad hatred of his father had increased against him.

"The King continues at Potsdam," Hotham explained in his letter of April 18th, "I have by Mr. Cnyphausen's advice deferred going thither . . . that I might give no uneasiness to the King whose jealousy is such that he would not bring the Prince Royal to Berlin, fearing I might have something to transact with him"; while in another communication he points out—"the letters which the Prince Royal writes to his sister are full of the ill-treatment he daily meets with from his father." Yet save when his life was in immediate danger no one dared interfere between the Prince and his persecutor, or attempt to ameliorate his lot.

At length Hotham, still awaiting the return of his courier from England, was bidden to be the guest for a few days of Frederick William at Potsdam, and he repaired thither filled with excitement at the thought of at last gratifying his curiosity by the sight of the Prince whom he so ardently desired to see. He was received with civility by Frederick William who, at the dinner which followed, took frequent occasions to speak well of England; but while deferentially attentive to the conversation of the King, Hotham's attention was directed furtively to that son of Frederick William of whom he had heard so much. In his next dispatch to England, dated April 22nd, he relates in cipher and with a reticence which is all the more significant—

The Prince was also at Table, and it is impossible to express the dejection and melancholy that appears in him. There is something so very engaging in the Person & Behaviour of this young Prince, and everybody says so much good of him, that one is the more moved by the unhappy Circumstances he is under. As I was presented to him in the King's presence our conversation was soon over.

Soon afterwards Frederick William again invited Hotham

to visit him for some hunting, and the Ambassador accordingly returned to Potsdam, where once more Frederick William discoursed pleasantly, sanely and graciously, while again Hotham was haunted by the sight of that Prince of romance and misfortune:—

All I can say is the more I see of the Prince Royal, the more I wish for everything that can facilitate the conclusion of that match, for if I am not much mistaken, this young Prince will one Day make a very considerable figure & from his good Qualitys and engaging Person, there is all the reason in the world to believe that it will prove a most happy marriage.

But the secret object of his visit, that of establishing some personal communication with the Prince, Hotham was unable to achieve. Meanwhile, pending the return of the messenger from England, both Frederick William and the British Envoy avoided the subject at issue between them. "As to the marriages," Hotham writes, "we are silent upon both sides upon that head. Mr. Cnyphausen is still sanguine that all will go well upon the footing of the proposal I have already made, and I hope he will not find himself mistaken, though, as to my part, I am every day more apprehensive of Grumkow's ascendancy over the King." This belief was doubtless strengthened by the fact that although more intercepted letters had reached Hotham in the interval, they were all rendered useless by the hesitation of Cnyphausen. "He was amazed, as well as myself," wrote Hotham, "at the Scene of Villainy that is carrying on between Reichenbach and Grumkow," nevertheless the timorous Minister pointed out that before moving in the matter it would be advisable to await the return of the Messenger from St. James's. "For as Grumkow's Disgrace also involves that of Seckendorf, the King of Prussia would never absolutely break with Seckendorf till he saw upon what terms he was with England." Moreover, on no account must Reichenbach be alarmed too soon, and put upon his guard.

Such procrastination ill-accorded with Hotham's mood. "Let the proposals from England be what they will," he comments angrily to Lord Townshend, "I don't see why that should hinder the King of Prussia from doing himself justice

and punishing two of his own servants that have so infamously abused him. Besides I cannot help thinking that these letters, if deliver'd now, might very much facilitate the Success of any Overture that may come from his Majesty [of England] by defeating at once the Opposition we meet with." And he adds earnestly: "As I am determined a Day or two after the Arrival of the Courier to lay open the whole scene of villany to the King of Prussia, and to put the Letters into his hands, it is hazarding nothing now to stop an original of each, which may be produced in case his Majesty be so credulous as not to give entire faith to them without seeing their own handwriting."[1]

So Hotham, chafing at delay, bided his time; and at last the long looked-for messenger returned from England bearing tidings which he believed would place the game in his hands. George having, as we have seen, carefully pre-arranged that his concessions should be perfectly valueless, cordially subscribed to the propositions of His Majesty of Prussia. Hotham was, indeed, instructed to make a formal proposal for two marriages, not one, but in so doing he had permission to state that the Crown Prince and his wife would be installed in the Government of Hanover as Stadtholders. The English Princess would have no fortune save this appointment; but on the other hand, England exacted no marriage portion with Wilhelmine.

Armed with these good tidings, and with the letters which he believed would inevitably strengthen his position, Hotham triumphantly demanded and obtained an audience from Frederick William on May 5th.[2] Townshend had at last decided that there could be no harm in Hotham reading aloud to the King certain carefully-selected passages from the incriminating correspondence; therefore, despite Cnyphausen, he was at length to work his will. He first unfolded to the King the purport of the Royal message from England, pointing out that "both his Prussian Majesty's Children would thus be provided for in the greatest and most honourable way, and he himself entirely eased of the burden of maintaining them"; and Frederick William, although observing that in an affair of such consequence it was impossible for him

[1] Hotham muniments.

[2] Lavisse erroneously gives the date a day earlier, May 4th.

to give an answer without consideration and consulting his Ministers, nevertheless seemed so gratified that Hotham seized the moment to introduce tactfully the subject he so long had had at heart :—

I said I was sorry that as to one of his Ministers he had acted so infamous a part towards us and so treacherous a one towards His Majesty that I hoped his opinion would have little weight with him ; and then I laid open the whole Scene of villany between Grumkow and Reichenbach, and made him sensible that, without any regard to truth, Reichenbach writ nothing but what was dictated to him from hence by Grumkow.

I remarked in reading some passages of Reichenbach's Letters wherein he reflects upon the King of Prussia himself that it moved His resentment ; but as to Grumkow's (which 'tis true are not altogether so strong as Reichenbach's) His Prussian Majesty seemed rather inclined to excuse him. Tho' he said that Grumkow had indeed informed him of the Correspondence he had with Reichenbach, but that he always understood it was only to have an account of the news of the town and the Transactions in Parliament.

I endeavoured as much as I could to stir up his Indignation against Grumkow, being very sensible how much my success depended upon his Ruin, but am sorry that it did not seem to me to make all the Impression I wished for.[1]

Through the reticence of Hotham's account one reads the bitter disappointment occasioned to him by this signal failure of his carefully prepared scheme. The bomb had fallen which was to have annihilated the Devil-Diplomatists, and they remained smiling, unscathed. Frederick William, the choleric over trivialities, could be unduly phlegmatic when it suited his policy to play a different rôle. Yet still Hotham did not wholly despair. He had so far, according to his instructions, only read the letters to the King. He was determined that Frederick William should have ample opportunity of perusing them personally and at his leisure comparing their contents, dictated by Grumkow, with the pretended information supplied from England by the "incendiary" Reichenbach. Within a week, he therefore sent the packet of letters direct to the King with the following note :—

[1] Hotham muniments.

To the King of Prussia.

à Berlin ce 11 May 1730.

SIRE,

Suivantes les orders de votre Majesté, j'ai l'honneur de lui envoyer les letters du General Grumkow et du Sieur Reichenbach dont je lui ai dejà parlé. J'espère qu'elle voudra bien les lire à son loisir, et je ne doute pas que Votre Majesté ne fasse des Reflections très utiles à son Service lors qu'elle verra que Monsr de Reichenbach, au lieu de lui écrire ce qui se passe veritablement chez nous, ne formé des Dépaches que sur ce qui lui est dicté et suggéré d'ici par Monsr de Grumkow et le General Seckendorf. Et pour preuve de cela Votre Majesté n'a qu'à comparer ces lettres avec celles que le Sieur Reichenbach à ecrit à Votre Majesté.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec le plus profond Respect et avec dévouement eternel.

Sire etc.

But Hotham had so far failed to gauge either the strength or the weakness of Frederick William. On the one hand the monarch was determined to believe nothing but what it suited his policy to accept, on the other he was more completely in the power of Grumkow than even Hotham had imagined. "Every day," Hotham wrote despairingly, "produces fresh instances of Grumkow's power. I can give no stronger instance of the strange Ascendancy he has over the King than that ever since his Prussian Majesty has read all the intercepted Letters he is still as much in his favour as ever." As Hotham had anticipated, directly Grumkow became aware of what had occurred he promptly denied his authorship of the incriminating correspondence. The letters, he stoutly maintained, were forgeries; names had been interpolated which he had never written; sentiments ascribed to him of which he was guiltless. The whole, he boldly asserted, was a gigantic fraud—of a piece with the rest of the conduct of England. In consequence, the indecision of Frederick William increased. Although his avarice was tempted by the proposals of England, yet his vanity—his dread of being duped by that rival Power, and his genuine fear of Austria—prevented his arriving at any conclusion, and his vacillations meanwhile were calculated to exasperate a more patient tactician than the English

Ambassador. A few days after the interview with Hotham, the King gave a dinner respecting which Hotham relates :—

None who were favourable to the English Alliance were invited and he drank success to the prosperity of the Emperor's arms in Italy and to the confusion of those that were Ennemys to him and the Empire, and yet within these few days he has repeated severall times that he wishes for nothing more than to live well with England and Holland, that the affairs of Italy have no relation to him and that directly or indirectly he will not concern himself about them. . . . This shows how little dependence is to be had upon anything he says, & that whoever draws conclusions from his Discourse only will very often find himself mistaken. The sure way of judging of this Prince is from his Fears, which in a great measure will always influence his actions, and indeed his unsteadiness and want of Resolution will hinder him from being either.

I am informed Gen. Grumkow says that ever since he has known that his Letters are opened in England, he has filled them with nothing but what relates to me. I don't suppose that he uses me very favourably, for in the manner I have treated him, I really do not deserve it at his hands.

In short, Hotham became alarmed lest the lies of Grumkow might even prevail against him personally at the Court of St. James. On May 12th he wrote to Lord Townshend anxiously respecting his antagonist :—

I keep no measures and have no sort of communication with him. He invited me yesterday to his daughter's wedding, and I refused to go ; he knows the manner in which I have treated him to the King and am persuaded he is not behindhand in returning me the compliment, so that I hope his Majesty will not be surprised if, before long, he should by his Arts and Insinuations put the King of Prussia upon asking my recall. . . .

Cnyphausen, meanwhile, still continued to predict the ultimate success of the negotiations between England and Prussia, but Hotham saw that the influence of this Minister had likewise been completely undermined by Grumkow, and that "his credit is at a lower ebb than he himself is aware of." Borch, the Minister who was now supplanting Cnyphausen in the favour of the King of Prussia, was a creature of Seckendorf

who, Hotham asserted—" Will not fail to make him insinuate to the King that by consenting to these proposals he will be no longer Master of the Person of his own Son." Thus, although the avarice of Frederick William was satisfied by King George's offer, " it will be difficult to propose anything to him that will remove his jealousy." Borch, the new favourite, indeed, professed friendship for Hotham and England, but the Envoy as swiftly took the measure of his supposed ally. " He is so weak a man, that even though he were sincere in his professions as to the Marriages, he will be led by Seckendorf to put a thousand obstacles in our way without knowing it ! " And in another letter endorsed *Most Secret,* Hotham relates the following strange incident :—

Every day produces fresh instances of Grumkow's Power. The King some time ago mentioned to Borch the intercepted letters I had put into his hands, which Borch acquainted me with. I told him that in those letters he was no better treated than a great many other men of honour, and gave them to him to read. They exasperated him so much that he immediately wrote a letter to the King to complain of Grumkow and to ask justice for the aspersions that had been thrown upon him.

The next day the King sent for them both together, and Grumkow absolutely denied that he had said anything of Borch in those letters, adding the decipherer had put in names he never thought of. Upon which the King ordered Borch to give Grumkow his hand & to be reconciled to him immediately. Borch was also named to attend the King into Saxony, but yesterday he received orders to remain here, and Grumkow is the only Minister who goes with the King thither.

Cnyphausen has never once seen the King since my first audience at Charlottenburgh, and on Tuesday last Borch brought him this extraordinary message from the King. " *Qu'il auroit à repondre si quelque Chose de sinistre arrivatt à Monsr Grumkow et qu'il lui ordonnait de se recommender avec lui et de ne se plus meler des affairs des Marriages sous peine d'être envoyé a Spandow, ou de confiscation de ses biens.*" There is something so odd and extravagant in this Message that I should question the truth of it, if the Person who relates it to me had not taken it from the original, and, *what* it alludes to, M. Cnyphausen knows no more than I do !

He wrote a letter immediately to the King assuring him that he had nothing to say to M. Grumkow & hoped that his Majesty

would not give credit to the Insinuations of his Enemys without hearing him & therefore begged to speak to him ; to which the King has as yet given no answer.

The situation, in short, was far from reassuring, yet Hotham seems to have been unprepared for the final evidence of the complete ascendancy which the intriguers had acquired over the King. Frederick William, after a long consultation with those very Ministers whose treachery Hotham had exposed, actually declined to accept the offer of the King of England. Despite the fact that, as Hotham points out, " the proposal he has now rejected was some time ago the thing in the world he was most fond of," he refused it with the trivial excuse that his acceptance would appear to the world as if he were either not able or willing to maintain his son, while the Prince himself would become a stranger among his future subjects, " and would be unacquainted with the Maxims by which he ought one day to govern this country." None the less, determined that, if his consent were eventually wrung from him, he would make yet better terms with England, Frederick William audaciously held out the proposition that, at some remote period to be fixed by himself, this refusal would be withdrawn provided all disagreement between England and the Austrian Emperor were terminated and that a guarantee was given by England to ensure to Prussia the right of succession to the coveted Duchies of Jülich and Berg.

The mortification and indignation of Hotham at such an answer may be imagined. " As to the King of Prussia's proposals," he wrote angrily to Lord Townshend, " I send them to your Lordship as General Borch delivered them to me by word of mouth, and as I took them down in writing for fear of any mistake. They have been altered three or four times in eight-and-forty hours by the King himself, which is the reason the Courier has not been dispatched sooner. . . . I content myself with relating bare matters of fact without making any Reflections upon them ; for in a Court like this where neither the King nor his Ministers are of the same opinion three hours together, all conjectures or reasoning must be very chimerical and to little purpose."

Hotham, indeed, told Borch plainly his opinion of the " Absurdity and extravagance " of the propositions which he

professed himself "*almost ashamed to transmit to England,*" and Borch, whose rôle appears to have been that of an affable sympathiser with all men, endeavoured in vain to preach patience and the ultimate happy conclusion of all differences. But Hotham recognised that, as far as open negotiations were concerned, to all intents his mission was at an end. Therefore, while awaiting the receipt of a formal answer from England, he endeavoured to encompass the desired consummation by the only channel now open to him.

He had meantime succeeded in establishing communication with the Prince Royal; and on May 13th wrote :—

Yesterday the Prince Royal sent a Person to me to desire I would in the most gratefull & affectionate manner possible assure his Majesty and the Queen that he should never forget the infinite obligation he had to them, but that he begg'd for God's sake that how unreasonable soever the Propositions from his Father might be, the King would not reject them immediately, for, tho' he was determined to lose his life sooner than marry any body but the Princess, yet if this Negociation was entirely broke off, his Father would use all manner of Extremetys to oblige him and his Sister to contract other Engagements.

Your Lordship may easily conceive how great a Mortification it is to me to see this Affair take the turn it has done, it would still be a greater uneasiness was I conscious it was owing to any mismanagement of mine, but having followed Mr Cnyphausen's directions, as I was order'd to do by my Instructions, I hope his Majesty will attribute the ill-Success of this Matter to nothing but the unaccountable Inconstancy of the King of Prussia's Temper, and the malicious Insinuations of our Enemys.

Of the attitude of the unfortunate Crown Prince at this juncture, Lavisse relates :—

The Crown Prince followed anxiously these negociations, upon which depended the destinies of his sister and himself. When he knew that their success was compromised, he wrote to Sir Charles Hotham begging him to act as his interpreter at the English Court, and to implore it, from him, to agree to his father's proposals, whatever they might be. He engaged himself anew to marry no one but Princess Amelia; he would sooner die than break that promise. It was therefore useless,

said he, to insist upon the double marriage. The most important point was that the negociations should not now be broken off; if they were, his father would certainly compel him and his sister to contract other marriages. A few days later Frederick wrote a second letter to Hotham, more pressing, more supplicating than the former. He knows that the King has been informed of his secret correspondence with the English Court, and "expects terrible things." He is already treated "in an unheard of manner." The King is quite determined not to consent to the double marriage. The Prince gives the reason for this resolve, at the same time expressing his regret at having to divulge matters which he "ought to conceal from everyone on earth." "To speak quite frankly, the real reason why the King will not consent to this marriage is that he wishes always to keep me in an inferior position, so that he can plague me all his life whenever the spirit moves him." The Prince does not wish to expose the Princess Amelia to share such an existence. He thinks therefore that it will be better simply to conclude the marriage of his sister, and not even demand from the King any assurances about the other "the more so as his word counts for nothing; let it suffice that I hereby reiterate the promises I have already made to the King, my uncle. I am a man of my word." [1]

Thus Lavisse epitomises the correspondence of the Prince with Hotham[2] and points out how Reichenbach subsequently "put the choicest weapon in his armoury of treachery into the hands of Grumkow when he revealed to him the secret promise made by Frederick to marry no one but the Princess Amelia." The discovery of this correspondence on the part of the Prince was a priceless asset to the intriguers and must have occasioned them supreme joy; nevertheless a far more important decision, rashly announced by Frederick to Hotham, did not come to their knowledge. On May 27th a dispatch was sent from Berlin "To my Lord Townshend *by Over, the Messenger: most secret,*" containing certain communications from the Prince, and revealing a project on his part so daring that Hotham appeared fearful to commit it to paper:—

[1] *The Youth of Frederick the Great*, translated by Stephen Louis Simeon, pages 233–4.

[2] As these letters have already been published by Carlyle and other historians they are not here quoted. The first bears date May 20th, the second May 25th.

I dispatch this Courier at the particular desire of the Prince Royal. The enclosed are of that consequence to His Royal Highness that it is necessary to use the utmost precaution. . . .

Your Lordship will see the Prince insinuates that in case His Majesty thinks proper to conclude the marriage of the Princess Royal with the Prince of Wales, he will make his escape over into England, in order to marry Princess Amelia.

He himself seems very sure that he will be able to put this design into execution, and indeed I have that opinion of this young Prince's honour that I do not doubt but he will run all hazards to effect it ; but how far it will be in his Power to do it, no body can tell, having so many about him, and every step he takes being so narrowly observed.

Thus was breathed the first mention of that project which was destined to have such far-reaching and disastrous results for the luckless Prince. Meanwhile Hotham, although alarmed at all that the suggestion entailed, yet hoped to have fresh facility for communication with Frederick in the near future. For at the end of May the King of Prussia had decided to journey into Saxony in order to be present at the fêtes which King Auguste of Poland was about to give at Muhlberg ; thither the Prince was to accompany his father, and thither Hotham designed to follow. That this meeting between the monarchs was full of political significance was evident, though strenuously denied. " No scheme at all or purpose on the part of poor Auguste," wrote Carlyle, " only that of amusing himself and astonishing the flunkeys of Creation—regardless of expense." " It is certain," wrote Hotham, " that the Court of Vienna assisted by that of Berlin will make their utmost effort during the Encampment to bring his Polish Majesty into their schemes." None the less, outwardly, during that festivity, all was to be revelry and display without ulterior motives ; and Hotham, apart from the opportunity which it might possibly afford for interchanging communication with the Prince, was eager, while awaiting the final answer from his Court, to witness a spectacle so unique and impressive as that about to take place at the camp of Radewitz.

CHAPTER IX

THE PAGEANT OF AUGUSTE

HISTORIANS throughout succeeding generations have loved to dwell on that meeting between the Sovereigns of Prussia and Poland with its pomp and its pageantry, the parading of 30,000 men in new uniforms, the tedious reviews beginning at daybreak and ending only when the spectators were wearied to exhaustion, the ceaseless banquets, concerts, theatrical displays—and throughout all, that tragic undercurrent of intrigue in which the Ambassador from England, the hapless Prince and the half-demented monarch were the chief performers. Nevertheless the account which Hotham personally transmitted to his Court, given as it is from his individual point of view, and coming as it does from one of the chief actors in that secret drama which was going forward, is of an interest which in much transcends, as it differs from, all others.

The camp where it was designed that the grand military display should take place, lay about ten miles distant from the town of Muhlberg, and was a flat clayey piece of ground about ten or twelve square miles in area, on the right bank of the Elbe. For weeks beforehand every village in the vicinity had been preparing for this grand transformation scene. One hamlet was turned into a slaughter-house, another into a bake-house with 160 bakers resident, another into a play-house, another into a post-office. Other localities were set apart for housing guests who could not be accommodated in the immediate neighbourhood of the camp ; while for their convenience and for the use of the troops, three temporary bridges of immense length were raised across the Elbe, one of pontoons, one of wood-rafts, and one of barrels.

The monarchs themselves, with their following of Princes

and Court officials, were lodged in a sumptuous wooden palace which two hundred carpenters and innumerable painters had been erecting and decorating ever since the previous Christmas ; and although there is no record where Hotham personally was located, it may be concluded that, as an Ambassador from England, he was provided with accommodation suitable to his rank, and with every luxury which the lavish arrangements of the Polish Sovereign made practicable.

On the very evening of his arrival at Radewitz he received an answer from the Court of St. James to the latest proposals of the King of Prussia. This pointed out decisively that the relations between England and the Emperor of Austria, as well as the disputed rights of succession to the Duchies of Jülich and Berg, had nothing to do with the marriages contemplated, which must be concluded without any political motives. Further, the dispatch emphasised, it must be finally understood that England was determined upon the double marriage, or none at all.

Hotham at once endeavoured to obtain an audience with the King of Prussia in order to communicate this ultimatum, but that monarch professed himself too much occupied for the present to grant it, and as he was subsequently afflicted with an attack of gout, the interview was indefinitely postponed. While awaiting this event, therefore, Hotham was at liberty to bestow undivided attention upon the strange scene which was being enacted around him, and of which forthwith, both in its political and its spectacular aspect, no detail escaped him.

Auguste, the First of Saxony and the Second of Poland, whom he now saw for the first time, was, in certain respects, a remarkable monarch. Early in life, having fought the Turks with bravery, he had become a candidate for the throne of Poland, and after embracing the Catholic religion, was elected King by the nobles of that country. Subsequently, in his effort to recover certain provinces lost to Sweden, he was defeated in 1705 by Charles XII, who then deposed him in favour of the Palatine of Posen. Later, however, assisted by the Czar, he embarked on a fresh war with Sweden which raged for nine years, when he recovered the throne of Poland, which he retained till death. Pleasure-loving, self-indulgent and lax

of principle, Auguste soon acquired the reputation of being the most dissolute monarch in Europe. Of stalwart build and elephantine proportions, he had been nicknamed " the Strong " on account of his powerful physique, and could, it was boasted, break horseshoes by unaided strength of grasp, or snap half-crowns between his finger and thumb. With ideas and habits in harmony with his frame, he viewed life from a standpoint of exaggeration. His expenditure, his gluttony, his excesses—nay, even the astonishing good temper which triumphed over the bodily ailments engendered by both—were alike abnormal. At sixty years of age, with a constitution undermined by his mode of life, he remained active in mind and body, equable in spirits, imperturbable in temper, yet, despite the varied experience of his career, he had never " put away childish things." His regal state was pantomimic, his conduct irresponsible, his expenditure unjustifiable—it is said that with needless campaigns and luxury he cost Saxony a hundred million thalers. Still while history has pronounced him contemptible, the correspondence of Hotham reveals him to have been possessed of a shrewdness which enabled him quietly to outwit some of the keenest intellects of his day; and undoubtedly his practical experience in the art of warfare rendered his military establishment of absorbing interest not only to a Sovereign of the martial proclivities of Frederick William, but incidentally to more pacific onlookers, among whom was the British Envoy.

The army [Hotham wrote to Lord Townshend soon after his arrival at Radewitz] consists of 24 Battalions, 16 Squadrons of Horses, besides a Battalion of Artillery, one of Janissarys and a Company of Cadets. They are as well clothed and appointed as ever I saw Troops, and upon the whole make a magnificent appearance. The Cavalry, tho' not bad, is much inferior to ours, the Infantry is very good, but a great part of the Army having been raised within this twelve months neither the Men or the Horses are as yet at all perfect in their Business. The Cloathing and Furniture of the Officers are excessively rich, and they are all of them, even to the Majors and Adjutants of Foot, finely mounted.

It is impossible to describe or imagine the Splendour and Magnificence of the King of Poland's Equipages, Tents and

Household, as it is amazing in what manner such a Profusion of Expence is either supplied or provided for, and what is more extraordinary I am assured by Persons of Credit that every thing Hitherto is paid, and that the K. of Poland has money in his Coffers to defray the Charge of this Encampment and pay his army till Christmas without borrowing a dollar or laying any new Burthen upon the People. Paradoxes, I own, beyond my comprehension.

Auguste, indeed, appears to have been a past-master in the art of scenic display, and the exhibition, which he had designed to last throughout the month of June, in its reckless extravagance and splendour, has been compared to that witnessed upon the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Carlyle points out that the Polish Sovereign "arranged everything like the King of Play-House Managers," that he personally might be seen "driving his own curricule" in the early morning in vigilant inspection of the arrangements for the day; and as the operations which he had planned began on certain occasions soon after daylight, his energy in contrast to his luxurious habit of living was certainly remarkable. So arresting, indeed, did Hotham find the events in which he was unexpectedly called upon to take part, that on June 4th he wrote again more fully to Lord Townshend:—"As I imagine," he suggests, "that his Majesty will not be displeased to have a particular account sent to him both of the troops and everything that passes during my stay here, I will take care to keep an exact journal." And thenceforward he transmitted to his Court, indited in excellent French, a diary wherein was punctiliously recorded every event of public interest, but from which it is not necessary here to quote in full the elaborate military manœuvres of which he makes detailed mention:—

Diary of Sir Charles Hotham at Radewitz

On May 31st, 1730, the day fixed for the meeting of the Kings, at 6 o'clock in the morning the King of Prussia with the Prince Royal & the other Princes & Gentlemen of Suite left Cosdorf, where he had slept, to go to Goritz. The King of Poland accompanied by the Prince Electoral & all the *Chevaliers de l'ordre de l'aigle blanc* was awaiting him there. A *déjeuner* was prepared in a magnificent Pavillion, 300 ft. long, specially decorated for the occasion.

On the right of the tent were stationed mules with superb trappings, and eighty-four led horses, Turkish, English & Polish, with saddle-cloths of embroidered velvet & trappings of which half were of yellow velvet embroidered and trimmed with silver lace & fringe, & the other half of tiger-skins on scarlet velvet laced with gold. Near these were drawn up thirty-six carriages & chariots all with six horses, the servants & trappings in the King's livery, yellow and blue, laced with silver, which is superb.

Their Majesties of Poland and Prussia after *déjeuner* entered a carriage and drove to the spot prepared for their reception on an eminence which commanded a bird's eye view of the Camp. This position was a square, guarded by Janissaries and a regiment of Cadets. The doors of the tents where their Majesties lodged being guarded by Turks clothed in Cloth of Gold with turbans trimmed with velvet. There were also Hungarians clad in scarlet, richly ornamented with gold fringe, and a dozen Guards dressed in scarlet cloth lavishly adorned with silver, & wearing bonnets of black velvet with white plumes.

In the middle of this Square was a Salon hung with Damask, crimson and yellow,[1] at the four corners of which there were immense vases and wine coolers of silver. From this room one passed into Galleries which opened into four apartments, beyond which were forty-eight tents intended to serve as bedchambers for the officers of the Suite accompanying the two Kings. The apartments for the Princes were hung with Turkish stuffs designed in gold and silver.

Beyond the four apartments were four other tents of greater dimensions, in three of which were tables of twenty-four covers with a dinner service of gold. At one end their Majesties dined, at the other the Royal Princes, and at a third other persons of distinction in the suite of the Kings. Beyond these three tables, were five others, each of twenty-four & served with silver plate.

The King of Poland was lodged in a great wooden house built expressly for the purpose, & the King of Prussia & his suite were encamped in tents close by.

On June 1st, the day fixed for the grand revue, the army, which consisted of forty-eight squadrons & twenty-four battalions under the Janissaries, shouldered arms at 6 a.m., the

[1] Carlyle states that " the general colour " of this Salon or Haupt Lager, " is bright green with gilt knobs and gilt gratings all about." If so, with its hangings of crimson and yellow, it must have presented a cheerful appearance.

two Kings, quitting their quarters, preceded by a troop of Hollaques and Pancernes wearing the tail of a horse, and twelve grooms superbly clad.

At the signal given by volleys of Cannon the Army left the Field & drew up in order of Battle. The two Kings then passed in front of their lines until they reached the Centre, where there were several Tents richly decorated, whence they could see the entire Army, & where the Princess Electoral of Saxony & all the Ladies of the Court were assembled.

The Army began by saluting their Majesties with a triple discharge of seventy-two pieces of Canon & all the musquetry ; then the Troops defiled and passed in review before the two Kings, the Cavalry in squadrons & the Infantry in divisions, each battalion preceded by two field-pieces & two chests of amunition. The whole lasted till four o'clock in the afternoon, when their Majesties returned to their quarters & dined together. The King of Poland, tired with the long Day, retired early.

At each of the two wings of the Army were erected three Pyramids of stone, about 30 ft in height, in memory of this encampment & of the meeting between the two Kings.

June 2d. This day was destined to repose ; and after having dined in the evening, all repaired to the Playhouse, about half a league from the King's quarters, where his Majesty had ordered a Troupe of Comedians from Dresden to perform, and for whom a very convenient theatre had been erected.

June 3d. At 6 o'clock in the morning the four Regiments of Dragoons forming sixteen Squadrons left the Camp in two Columns and ranged themselves in order of battle before the Pavilion, which is a building of wood constructed in the plain for this occasion, and adorned with paintings. This building is placed a cannon-shot in front of the line. Their Majesties with the Princes, Princesses and Nobles of their suite repaired thither.

The regiments performed their manœuvres on horseback and on foot. [A lengthy description follows.] When all was ended, a magnificent breakfast was served.

June 4th. No manœuvres with the troops took place this day, His Majesty the King of Prussia dined with the Field Marshal and the King of Poland in his Palace with a few invited guests. Between four and five o'clock a Comedy was performed, and in the evening dancing took place till midnight in the Palace of the King of Poland.

June 5th. All the Cavalry in 32 Battalions left Camp at six A.M. and stationed themselves in front of the Pavilion, where the King of Prussia, with all the Princes and Generals of his Suite, and the Prince and Princesses Electoral de Saxe with the ladies of the Court, also repaired, the King of Poland being unable to be present owing to indisposition. [After the manœuvres] breakfast was served as on other days, and then the King, the Princes, Princess and Generals returned to their quarters.

June 6th. An interlude for rest, as before. In the evening a concert took place.

June 7th. The infantry were to have manœuvred before the two Kings, but this was postponed on account of the indisposition of his Majesty the King of Prussia, who had gout in the hand, and the King of Poland was also indisposed.

The 8th Nothing took place, except that in the evening a Concert was performed.

The 9th. The same ; except that in the evening a Comedy was performed.

The 10th. At six a.m. the infantry shouldered arms and left the Camp in two long columns at a signal given by Canon. They formed in front of the Pavilion. [The manœuvres continued throughout the day.] As usual a magnificent *déjeuner* was served ; and at length the troops defiled in two long columns past the Kings and returned to their quarters while the Court repaired to the apartments of the King to dine.

Sunday the 11th was devoted to repose, and in the evening a Comedy was played, the intervals being filled by Music and Italian Singers, male and female.

The 12th. [The entire day was devoted to military manœuvres which Hotham describes minutely.]

The 13th. At two o'clock in the afternoon a signal was given by three volleys of Canon, at which six Squadrons left the Camp bearing lances at the end of which were little standards of different colours. The lancers themselves wore breastplates and armour, while their helmets, at the side of which were aigrettes of steel in the form of wings, were shining like their breastplates. They held their lances aloft, and the officers wore white plumes beneath their helmets and on their arms silk epaulettes the colour of the banners upon their lances. The effect was truly magnificent.

The six Squadrons, (pennants flying and armour shining) rode towards the Pavilion, and were followed by five Battalions,

in the centre, Grenadiers, and the four others pike-men at the bottom of whose pikes were attached little red and white flags similar to, but smaller, than those of the cavalry. [The manœuvring in the sham battle which followed was exceedingly picturesque, all the signals for the different movements being given by a dozen pieces of canon ranged in front of the Pavilion, whence the King of Prussia witnessed all which took place. At last the King mounted his horse to see the retreat, while the ladies re-entered their carriages and returned to their various quarters. The King of Poland, Hotham adds, on account of indisposition and also of the bad weather in the morning, was not present.]

The day following, June 14th, was again dedicated to repose, save for a grand dinner and a ball given in the evening by the Duc de Weimar. It was, however, spent by Hotham in writing a dispatch to the English Government describing the intermittent course of the negotiations with which he was charged. On the 7th he had, indeed, written despairingly to St. James's that he could obtain no answer from Frederick William, but "as I expect it will be of a piece with all the rest, I hope to have his Majesty's orders to return to England soon after I get back to Berlin." Both Kings at Radewitz refused to transact business, declaring that they had met solely for purposes of diversion, wherefore nothing was permitted to interfere with the daily scheme of amusement, save only the oft-recurring attacks of gout or other indisposition from which they alternately suffered, and which, although not surprising in view of their habits, it is possible may at times have been feigned in order to provide a respite from the interminable manœuvres or more interminable banquets from which, otherwise, there was no escape.

At last, however, Hotham received a tardy intimation that the King of Prussia would see him on the morning of Sunday, June 11th, but on repairing to the Royal tent at the hour indicated he found Frederick William just mounting his horse, and during the brief interview which was all he could obtain, Hotham delivered the message of his Government by word of mouth.

Frederick William replied that he had not time to "enter into a discourse, that Hotham must leave the message with

him in writing, and that he would give an answer in two or three days time." He added sulkily that he had always understood that, by former treaties, England had guaranteed to his family the succession to Berg and Jülich, to which Hotham rejoined that "if His Majesty would give himself the trouble to read over those Treatys, he would be satisfied of the contrary."[1] At that Frederick William rode away, and later Hotham appears to have shared the disability under which the two monarchs so often laboured, for on the 14th he writes :—

I have been confined to my quarters these two or three days by a slight Indisposition, but by what I can learn, the Imperial Party here as yet gains no ground. As often as they have attempted to enter upon Business with the King of Poland, he has constantly turned the Discourse upon some other Subject, and a few days ago he gave General Ginckel, who delivered a Letter to him from the States, the strongest Assurances that he should be very cautious how he entered into any engagements with the Court of Vienna.

It is very certain that the Imperial Faction here, joyn'd with that of Prussia, use their utmost Efforts to bring the King of Poland into their measures and leave no stone unturned to effect it.

Even under adverse conditions Hotham could rejoice at the one satisfactory aspect of the situation—the characteristic manner in which Auguste the Imperturbable continued to parry the covert attacks of his friends. On June 15th, however, Hotham was back in the field of action, and spent that day again busily describing the manœuvres which, commencing at six in the morning, continued till dusk. But on the 16th, which is marked by the entry "*Les Troupes se reposent,*" possibly to his surprise he received the reply of Frederick William to the final propositions of His Majesty of

[1] This treaty, concluded in the year 1666 between Charles II and the Elector of Brandenburg, Hotham states, "is expressly restrained to such Possessions as his house was then or shall be legally disposed or posessed of, and it is also expressly stipulated that in case any differences [arise] between the Palatine and Brandenburg families relating to that Succession, all the Crown of Great Britain stands engaged for is to offer its mediation towards composing them."

Letter from Hotham, from the Camp at Radewitz, June 14th, to the Duke of Newcastle, who succeeded Lord Townshend as Secretary of State on May 15th, 1730.

England, and although Hotham had been prepared to find this " of a piece with all the rest " the actual fashion of the answer must have occasioned him considerable annoyance.

For the letter, doubtless planned by Seckendorf and Grumkow, and addressed to Hotham personally, was, in view of the protracted nature of the negotiations and of the manner in which the Court of St. James had agreed to the various demands of His Prussian Majesty, a scarcely-veiled insult. The King reminded the British Ambassador that he had been sent to Berlin solely on account of a communication which, in the first instance, the Queen of Prussia had dispatched to the Queen of England. That missive had stated that if the Court of St. James still contemplated a marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Princess of Prussia, it was time to bring matters to a conclusion, which must be done unconditionally, all the more that the Princess in question had the alternative of other brilliant prospects. That His Majesty of England should have subsequently introduced the idea of a second alliance *was therefore a fresh condition, which entirely altered the original negotiation.* The Prince Royal, his father decided, was at present too young to marry. In view of the fact that the King of Prussia had so many other heirs, he could not think it " *convenable à ses Intérets d'entrer si tôt et avec tant de précipitation dans le projet de ce double marriage.*" Since it was essential first that the Prince should distinguish himself and prove himself worthy to be the head of a family, His Majesty had no intention of the Prince marrying before he had attained thirty years of age. But the Chevalier Hotham would quite understand that this decision was not a refusal of the proffered alliance—far from it—it was merely *a postponement.* The Court of Great Britain had many other Princesses with regard to whom in the future it would be easy to negotiate an alliance when a suitable date arrived.

This, then, was, in substance, the decision of His Majesty of Prussia. Nothing was to be concluded with " *tant de précipitation !* " What the Chevalier Hotham in truth understood and felt when he perused this masterpiece of procrastination is lost to posterity, yet easy to divine. *If His Majesty of Prussia had determined that the Prince should not marry under the age of thirty, why, in the name of all the gods, had he not said*

so in the first instance, without this interminable delay, this harrying of Kings and Ministers, this sending of messengers backwards and forwards, this cruel flaunting of false hopes before a young and romantic couple, only in the end to inform them that the King of Prussia has many other sons, the King of England many other daughters, twelve years hence an alliance may indeed take place between the Royal Families of England and Prussia, but who will be bridegroom and who bride is a matter of small moment? Inevitably as such thoughts must have filled Hotham's mind, and completely as he must have recognised that all hope was now at an end of his achieving any satisfactory conclusion to his mission, it yet behoved him to send to England the last message of the King of Prussia, and to await the answer thereto from St. James's ere he could hope to quit Berlin for his native land.

On the morrow, therefore, we find him resuming his diary of events as punctiliously as before. That day, June 17th, the manœuvres commenced at five in the morning ; the 18th was devoted to repose. On the 19th the manœuvres began yet an hour earlier, and after a long and energetic day only a brief parade took place on the 20th. On the 21st, the operations of the army were of a different character :—

This day (relates Hotham) was devoted to crossing the river in full view of the enemy. About seven o'clock in the morning, eight squadrons of cavalry went into ambuscade near the river Elbe, and at ten, twelve Battalions followed, having first sent on some infantry near a spot higher up along the river, hoping to decoy the enemy into a false attack.

Tents had been erected on the further side of the Elbe, on an elevation so well-chosen that we could see all round. The Kings with their suites arrived there at one o'clock, and the signal for the commencement of the proceeding was given by a volley of cannon from the aforesaid elevation on which a battery of 36 pieces was in readiness. The Infantry deputed to make the false attack commenced by charging, which drew the enemy to dispute their passage. This infantry was supported by a little fleet of frigates and galleys which fired their cannon for two hours, till, being no longer able to hold their position, they threw themselves into their boats and went down the river, subsequently passing over a bridge, erected during the night, which was so covered with boughs and branches of

trees that it was invisible from the bank. On the further side, however, lay in wait for them an ambuscade of eight Battalions which had slept concealed there all the previous night ; and forthwith there ensued a fierce combat, the fleet, with flags flying as they floated away down stream, attacking the enemy entrenched on the bank, and in their passage blowing up a bridge which impeded their progress.

With attack and counter-attack, with deafening volleys of cannon and discharges of musketry, with manœuvres of indescribable ingenuity on land and water, the mimic warfare continued till nine o'clock at night, when those who had witnessed it, as well as those who had taken part in it, retired to their respective quarters too fatigued, apparently, to indulge in further entertainment.

The 22nd was a day of rest ; on the 23rd more manœuvres took place ; but the 24th, being again a day devoted to repose, Hotham once more employed his time in penning dispatches to his Government at home. " To-night," he relates, " there is to be a most magnificent Firework, and a great hunt on Tuesday, when the two Kings take leave of each other. . . . I shall go to Dresden for two days, and propose to be in Berlin this day seven-night "—and he adds complacently :—

For some days past the Imperial Prussian Party have redoubled their Efforts to induce the King of Poland to enter into engagements with them, but hitherto to no purpose as I am assured from good hands ; and in all probability this interview will not produce any of the effects with which they flattered themselves.

With what covert satisfaction all concerned must have looked forward to the close of that long-drawn-out festivity Hotham forbears to mention. But, obviously weary of the proceedings, to the final triumph of Auguste's ingenuity he devotes but scanty description. " On June 24th," he subsequently wrote briefly, " there was a great fire-work upon the Elbe, which was followed with the illuminations of about thirty sloops, attended by several Gondolas and small boats illuminated. The Sloops fired their Cannon for an hour or two together, and afterwards there was a fine concert, vocal and instrumental, in a very magnificent Sloop—the whole

lasted from 10 o'clock in the evening till three or four in the morning." He refrains even from pointing out how, since the entertainments of Auguste must have wellnigh deafened the spectators with the incessant cannonade which was an indispensable adjunct to them, music " instrumental and vocal," though prolonged till daybreak, must have been a soothing substitute to the nerve-racked susceptibilities of the Royal guests. But the brevity of Hotham's description is supplemented by the inflated account long afterwards provided by Carlyle.

" The Bucentaur and Fleet were all hung with coloured lamplets," writes Carlyle, " Headquarters and Army Lager ditto ; gleaming upwards with their golden light into the silver of the Summer Twilight ; and all this is still nothing to the scene there across the Elbe, on our southeast corner. You behold that Palace of the Genii ; wings, turrets, main-body, battlements . . . hung with lamps, begirt with fire-works, no end of rocket-serpents, catherine-wheels ; with cannon and field-music, near and far to correspond . . . shining to men and gods. Pinnacles, turrets, tablatures, tips with various fires and emblems, all is there. . . . And the cannons fire, almost without ceasing ; and the field-music, guided by telegraphs, bursts over all the scene at due moments : and the catherine-wheels fly hissing : and the Bucentaur and silk Brigantines glide about like living flambeaus :—and in fact you must fancy such a sight. King Auguste, tired to the bone, and seeing all successful, retired about midnight. Frederick William stood till the finale : Saxon Crown-Prince and he in a window of the highest house in Promnitz : our young Fritz and the Margraf of Anspach, they also, in a neighbouring window, stood till the finale two in the morning when the very sun was not far from rising."[1]

It might have been imagined that after such a night, another " jour de repos " would be considered necessary ; but, in these closing stages of the great drama, the fun waxed fast and furious, little time was allowed for rest, scarcely was breathing space permitted. Those who retired to bed at four, after contemplating that pantomimic display, can have snatched but a brief slumber ere they rose again, a couple of

[1] *Life of Frederick the Great*, by Thomas Carlyle, Vol. II, pages 192–3.

hours later, to prepare for the final events of this stupendous entertainment. For this last day had been dedicated by King Auguste to the pleasures of the table, of which he was no mean exponent, and he designed to give a feast to his entire army. An enormous accumulation of viands had been procured in preparation, besides eighty oxen slain and roasted, while three measures of beer and two of wine had been allotted to gladden the heart of each man present. The soldiers had been busy in advance cutting trenches and fashioning mounds, on which planks were now laid to serve respectively as seats and tables. At the end of each table was raised a triglyph upon the two strong posts of which, in barbaric fashion, was staked an ox's head with the ox's hide hanging beneath as drapery, while from the sides of the posts were suspended the four roasted quarters of the animal wherewith the guests were to satisfy their hunger. Meantime into the centre of all, subject of ceaseless speculation to the curious, there was drawn by a team of eight horses, a gigantic framework of wood, hidden beneath a tent, and subsequently rigidly guarded from inspection by a vigilant corps of cadets.

At length the wished-for hour struck, the troops right joyfully tramped on to the ground, and seating themselves in two long lines, the 30,000 men fell upon the good cheer set in abundance before them. Their long weary manœuvres during the past four weeks, their marching and cannonading now met with its reward ; viands were demolished, drink flowed freely, jests were bandied on the summer air, and addled brains waxed joyous. Moreover, while the hunger of the diners was appeased, their eyes were feasted with a gratifying pageant. For slowly down their lines came riding a glittering train, the two stout Kings, Auguste the Imperturbable and Frederick William the Choleric ; the two Crown Princes, of whom—so strangely work the dealings of Time and Chance—one was in the future to be conqueror of the other ;[1] and lastly a following, gay in gala dress, of Princes of lesser rank, of Court officials, of Devil-Diplomatists—now smiling with

[1] Auguste III, who succeeded his father as Elector of Saxony in 1733, the only legitimate son of the 350 offspring with which Auguste II was credited, later espoused the cause of Maria Theresa and was vanquished by Frederick the Great.

unwonted affability—and of Ambassadors of various nationalities, all the notable guests of convivial Auguste, amongst whom presumably rode the handsome Englishman, champion of a lost cause, *Ce grand Oracle*, Sir Charles Hotham, the Special Envoy.

Leisurely the regal procession passed along the ranks of the diners while hats were doffed and 30,000 loyal throats made the air resound with deafening cheers. Then the Royal party and their following returned to their green and gilt, crimson and yellow pavilion, there themselves to feed in sumptuous fashion, served on delicate china and golden plate. From this eminence, however, they could overlook the humbler feasters now waxing hilarious in repletion; and ere the Royal banquet was ended, the greatest, the most childish scene of all was enacted. At a given signal the cadets fell back from the mysteriously guarded tent in the plain below, the encircling draperies were withdrawn, and there stood revealed to the assembled multitudes the largest cake that ever mortal eye had witnessed. "It is fourteen ells long by six broad," relates Carlyle, "and at the centre half an ell thick. Baked by machinery . . . there are five thousand eggs in it, thirty six bushels (Berlin measure) of sound flour; one tun of milk, one tun of yeast, one ditto of butter; crackers, gingerbread-nuts, for fillet or trimming, run all round. Plainly a Prince of Cakes!"[1]

At a signal given by the King's Architect-in-Chief, a carpenter armed with a gigantic knife made an incision in the monster, and entering the breach, proceeded, in obedience to solemn signs from headquarters, and in accordance with a previously arranged diagram, to cut it up and distribute it. In the end, however, the many cubic yards still left undissected were abandoned to the army to be scrambled for, as well as the remains of the Royal feast, and even the delicate china upon the Royal tables. Auguste was nothing if not lavish, and the scene of his half-drunken army fighting alike for remnants and for mementoes of his feast, must have been a

[1] Carlyle, Vol. II, pages 194–5. Lavisse gives quite a different account of its construction. He says that this cake, fourteen yards long and six broad, had absorbed *six hundred eggs*, three barrels of milk, a barrel of butter, etc. etc. (Lavisse, page 236).

spectacle peculiarly gratifying to his vanity. When all was ended and something like order again restored, the regiments formed up, and the officers of each, preceded by their respective bands of music, came marching—as best they could—to pay their final respects to their monarch's honoured guest, the King of Prussia, while the latter—also to the best of his remaining ability—drank a health to each party, who responded and then threw their empty glasses aloft with shouts. Sixty pieces of artillery punctuated each toast, while the whole was enlivened by countless bands of music; and thus, with smashing glass, crashing music, and drunken cheers, the great day—the colossal entertainment of convivial Auguste—was finally brought to a close.

Of all this, and of his own impression of the proceedings, Hotham makes slight mention. Minute as had been his description of the previous military manœuvres, he dismisses in a few words King Auguste's great entertainment, carefully omitting his own opinion of the more childish aspects of that festivity—the immense cake, the scene of 30,000 men scrambling for the fragments of the feast, the hilarious toasts. "As I am informed that Letters, although writt in Cypher, are not safe," he mentions to the Duke of Newcastle later, "I dare not venture to give your Grace so particular an account of this Court, and therefore shall defer it till I return to England." Hotham had learnt caution, and he relates, equally without comment, the events of the following day. "The Kings of Prussia and Poland took the diversion of Hunting at Lichtenbourg, when above 1000 stags, wild boars, and Roebucks were killed. Their Majestys dined together after the hunting was over, and about six o'clock in the evening the King of Prussia took his leave and set out for Potzdam, and the King of Poland lay that night at Cosdorf and arrived afterwards at Dresden."

None the less Hotham could not forbear amused reference to one incident, tragi-comic in essence, which commemorated the parting of the Kings. Frederick William's craze for giants remained irrepressible, and he had noted with considerable jealousy the abnormal stature of some of the components of King Auguste's infantry. On a previous occasion when he had ventured to solicit the transference of certain coveted

units of Auguste's army to his own, his Polish Majesty had responded curtly—"*Je ne suis pas marchand de la chair humaine.*" Despite this rebuff, Frederick William found it impossible to refrain from another attempt to secure so desirable an acquisition, and at Radewitz Hotham relates :—

The two Kings parted with great protestations of Friendship for each other. . . . It was impossible, however, for the King of Poland to withstand the importunity of his Majesty in an affair not altogether, it is true, of much consequence, for he made him a present of twenty-four Tall Men much against his will, and to the inexpressible grief of the poor Fellows !

In other matters, however, Auguste with unruffled mien, placidly ignored the importunities of his guests. Against his quiet imperturbability to the last the diplomatists expended their arts in vain. Hotham who, as the guest of his Polish Majesty, subsequently "lay two nights in Dresden," bears renewed testimony to the masterly tact with which Auguste, the butt of intrigue, preserved his friendship with all factions but succumbed to none. "The day the two Kings parted, Seckendorf and Grumkow renewed their Instances with the greatest Earnestness to engage the King of Poland to make some declaration in their Favour, or at least to make some Propositions to the Emperor," he asserts, but with what success he soon learns :—

Persons to whom I give entire credit, and who must be the best informed of everything that passes here, assure me that the King of Poland has continued firm to the last, notwithstanding the repeated efforts of the King of Prussia and the Imperial Minister ; and when the King of Prussia and Genll. Seckendorf urged that the Emperor was ready to agree to any Proposals that should be made to him on the part of his Polish Majesty, the King of Poland replied that he had nothing to ask of the Emperor, but if his Imperial Majesty had any proposals to make to *him*, he desired they might be given in writing, and when he had considered them and taken the advice of his Council he would return an answer to them.

Not all the diplomatists of Prussia, not even Grumkow for whom he exhibited marked friendship, could harry Auguste into any rash committal ; and when Hotham, with a tact

equal to that monarch's own, congratulated His Majesty on the irreproachability of his attitude, he, too, met with an answer applicable alike to friends and foes:—

Berlin,
July 4th.

When I took my leave of the King of Poland on Sunday I told him I would give a true account of the fine condition and great order in which I had seen his Army to the King my Master, who would hear with the greatest satisfaction the Prudence and Moderation of his Polish Majesty at this critical juncture, and that his Majesty expected no less from a Prince of his Wisdom & Experience. He made answer that he still hoped the Differences in Europe would be made up without coming to a Rupture. That he was for doing everything he could to heal them, and would do nothing to foment them.

With which enigmatic pronouncement it will be seen that occasionally the wisdom of Solomon was rivalled by Auguste the Strong!

CHAPTER X

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

THUS ended that great spectacle of the Camp of Radewitz. Auguste, well satisfied with his performance, complacently returned to his capital having quietly frustrated the designs of his avowed friends. Frederick William, less pleased at the routing of his Ministers, hid a ruffled spirit under a gracious exterior, and went his way to Berlin consoled by the acquisition of his twenty-four unhappy Polish "Tall Men." But while this great pageant had been in progress, what of that other drama which had been going forward—that secret intrigue which alone in the eyes of posterity has lent a value to incidents ephemeral otherwise as the smoke in which they were enveloped ?

Amid the thunder of guns and the tramping of troops, Hotham had succeeded in establishing secret communication with the unhappy Prince, the object of his mission. The fantastic pomp, the regal display of which Frederick formed one of the central figures, had but served to enhance his misery and his humiliation. To the Princes, the ambassadors, the officials who bowed before him, nay, to the very scullions who served him, he saw himself an object of pity—more completely a slave than the humblest carl who paraded for his entertainment in the dust and heat. For few among the lowest of those thus assembled but could at will leave a service which proved distasteful, while he, the son of a monarch and a future monarch, was chained indefinitely to a life of misery. And as with the negotiations for his marriage which, in adding to his importance, had but increased the hatred of the King, so now, the more consequence did he acquire in the eyes of the onlookers by taking his true part in the prevailing pageantry,

the more did the insane jealousy of his father determine to humble him to the earth. "Never," relates Lavisse, "had the King treated him with such brutality as in the camp at Muhlberg. One day he had beaten him cruelly, thrown him upon the ground, and dragged him about by the hair. Frederick had to appear on the parade ground in a very disordered condition." All the world knew and discussed his plight; all eyes scanned him with curiosity. The King even sneered at his powers of endurance. "Had I been treated thus by my father," he gibed, "I should have killed myself, but it makes no difference to you—you will put up with anything."

Yet when the blows rained hardest and the taunts were sharpest, when even the ill-disguised compassion of the multitude became intolerable, the Prince had a secret armour of defence which braced him to endure. He had but to conjure up the vision of a future which seemed approaching, and the present waxed impotent to harm. Through the wearisome manœuvres, through the interminable banquets at which he was forced to feign drunkenness in order to appease his father, through the terrifying interviews with the mad monarch, that vision sustained him. He wove a dream of himself with his young bride as Stadtholder in Hanover, in a world where the crooked would be made straight; a world where, palpitating for freedom, he would at last be master of his own brain and soul; where drilling would no longer be the sole aim of existence; where music, poetry, and science would no longer be vices, and drunkenness no longer an essential to manliness; a world of love and roses, of beauty, bliss and power! Amelia of England became to him the embodiment of all for which he yearned. Daily he grew more enamoured of her visionary personality. Daily he pictured her longing for his society as ardently as he desired hers; he visaged the loveliness, the sympathy, the tenderness with which she would bring balm to his tortured youth. With such a talisman to support him, the Prince could suffer and submit. A little patience, a little tact, and that fairyland of his dreams would surely be his.

Only, where so much was at stake, uncertainty was torment, and with feverish anxiety the Prince strove to probe his fate. Unable to hold communication with Hotham personally, he had recourse to the intermediary who had

proved invaluable on former occasions, the "brisk, handy military man," Captain Guy Dickens whom, for some reason, Frederick William does not seem to have suspected. But soon this channel of intercourse was threatened, for the Minister to whom Dickens was secretary, Brigadier Dubourgay, was recalled to St. James's, and not only the Prince but, under existing conditions, Hotham himself, recognised with dismay that after the Ambassador's departure there would no longer be any plausible excuse for the continued residence in Berlin of his former secretary. Hotham had at once written to England pointing out that Dickens was of the greatest use; "As he has all along had access to the Queen and the Prince at Berlin, he can transact things with them secretly which I can't do without being taken notice of"; wherefore, Hotham urged, it was advisable that some means should be found for continuing the presence in Berlin of so valuable a coadjutor. And the Court of St. James, considering these representations, appointed Dickens to the post of Ambassador which Dubourgay had vacated: but before this was officially announced, Hotham had discovered another service in which he determined to employ the valuable aid of the ex-secretary.

On the 16th of June, as we have seen, Frederick William had announced his decision that the marriage of his son should not take place till the Prince was thirty years of age. It was not long before these terrible tidings were conveyed to the Prince either through Captain Dickens or through another intermediary often employed for the purpose, Frederick's friend and confidant, Lieutenant Katte. The despair into which the Prince was thereby plunged may be imagined. In one moment he saw the fair fabric of his dreams ruthlessly shattered, while before him stretched twelve interminable years during which the King designed to prolong that life of ignominy and torture he now endured. From eighteen to thirty is an eternity; it represented all that was best of his young life. And even when those years of bondage had slowly passed, even then? Amelia, on whom he had centred his romantic affection, would be old, another Princess would be substituted; or possibly his marriage would be again deferred, and fresh unhappiness provided by the tyrant in whose hands lay his fate. Small wonder that the Prince formed the resolu-

tion to endure no longer, but at the earliest opportunity to put into execution the scheme of flight which he had long contemplated, but from which he had so far been deterred by the fear of all which his mother and sister might have to suffer in consequence, and by a promise to abandon it which Wilhelmine, terror-stricken, had once wrung from him.

Thus it happened that when Hotham was about to send to England the letter which he had received from the King of Prussia on June 16th, he found it advisable to send Captain Guy Dickens as his messenger, for, under cover of this dispatch, it was necessary to convey to St. James's a dangerous document which could only be entrusted to a person of great reliability. The sum of the communication with which Dickens was thus entrusted had best be given in Hotham's own words :—

From the Camp of Radewitz in Saxony 16th June 1730
To the Duke of Newcastle by Captain Guy Dickens,
Most secret.

My Lord,

The subject of this Dispatch is of that consequence and so nearly concerns the Person and safety of the Prince Royal, that I thought I could not use too much precaution, and therefore have entrusted Captain Guy Dickens with it. And I judged it the more necessary to send him because he is perfectly informed of everything and can give his Majesty all the Light which it is proper he should have in this important affair. Whereas had I sent an ordinary courier 'tis possible some further information might have been wanting which I could not have had time to have sent before the Prince puts his design in execution.

I must now acquaint your Grace that some days ago the Prince being without his Spies about him, which hardly ever happens, met accidentally with Captain Guy Dickens and bid him follow him into his tent. He there told him he had long waited for an opportunity of speaking either to him or me in private upon his present melancholy situation. That he could no longer bear the outrageous treatment that he every day met with from his father, and was therefore resolved to make himself easy as soon as he could, and thought he had now a favourable opportunity to do it. That he was to attend the King his father to Anspach from whence he was to take a turn to

Studtgard, which not being very far from Strasbourgh he was determined to make his escape thither, and from thence proceed to Paris where he designed to stay only six weeks or two months and then go over to England. He added he chose to go first to France and to make some stay there, for if he went immediately over to England, his Father might suspect the Queen, his Mother, was privy to this design, which would expose her to very cruel treatment.

His Royal Highness desired Captain Guy Dickens to acquaint me with these his intentions, and that he relyed wholly upon the King's goodness and affection to take such measures as he should think most effectual to save his sister from ruin. He seems at the same time earnestly to wish that some method could have been thought of to put her Person in safety before he begun his Journey to Anspach, but said whether that could or could not be done he was resolved to put his design in execution. He said further that his Measures were well taken, and that he wanted for nothing that might facilitate his escape, and desired I would write to our Court to dispose the Court of France to grant him their protection.

This is what the Prince desired me to communicate to his Majesty. It is possible the thing may miscarry by the Prince's being watched too narrowly or by some other unforeseen accident, but there is no room to doubt of the Prince's having taken a fixt resolution, and that even he will run great hazards to free himself from the oppression he is at present under. As the King of Prussia's stay at Berlin will be but short after he returns thither, I must beg that Captain Guy Dickens may be re-dispatched as soon as possible, that the Prince Royal may know His Majesty's thoughts upon this important occasion before he sets out for Anspach.[1]

Of Hotham's personal anxiety, meanwhile, respecting this secret with which he was burdened, we get no hint. It must have been very apparent to him that, in the dangerous situation in which he now found himself, he might at any moment be utilised as the scapegoat of two angry monarchs. Still more, one false step and he might bring upon himself the contumely of all concerned; he might be the instrument of a disruption between two countries such as could involve Europe in the war which already threatened. Yet, whatever his private anxiety at this juncture, he betrayed no token of

[1] Hotham muniments.

alarm. He appears to have gone his way in the same fearless, uncompromising spirit in which he had throughout conducted the negotiations, being minded only, amid the manifold pitfalls which beset his path, to follow one course, that of adhering strictly to the letter of his instructions.

Meantime Dickens, at St. James's, pleaded, as Villa had done before him, the cause of the distressed : and Carlyle thus relates his mission and its sequel :—

While the Camp at Radewitz is dissolving itself in this manner, in the last days of June, Captain Guy Dickens, the oracles at Windsor having given him their response to Prince Frederick's wild project, is getting underway for Berlin again—whither also Hotham has returned to wait for Dickens' arrival, and directly thereupon come home. Dickens is henceforth to do the British Diplomacy here, any Diplomacy there can well be ; Dickens once installed, Hotham will, right gladly, wash his hands of this Negociation, which he considers to be as good as dead for some time past. First, however, he has one unexpected adventure to go through in Berlin ; of most unexpected celebrity in the world ; this once succinctly set forth, History will dismiss him to the shades of private life.[1]

It was late on the night of July 3rd when Hotham reentered Berlin from his brief visit to Dresden, and within a week from that date Guy Dickens had returned from England bearing, to the surprise of all, fresh suggestions from St. James's which were calculated to fan into a brief flame the expiring negotiations between the Sovereigns. Dickens, in view of the urgency of the situation, had extracted from King George this concession—that His Majesty of England would consent either to delay both marriages so that they might be celebrated together, or immediately to conclude the marriage between the Prince of Wales and Wilhelmine, under a guarantee from the King of Prussia that the marriage between Frederick and the Princess Amelia would take place within a given time-limit. For the Prince, Dickens likewise brought a secret consolation of a cautious nature. The King of England gave his nephew the greatest assurances of his commiseration and of a sincere desire to aid him, but His Majesty, evidently genuinely alarmed at Hotham's communication, did not think

[1] *Life of Frederick the Great*, Vol. II, page 198.

the present moment suitable for putting the Prince's plan into execution. He begged Frederick to delay taking such a step, at least till he saw the result of the fresh concessions made by England in regard to the negotiations for his marriage ; and in order to secure a postponement of the dangerous project, Guy Dickens was authorised on behalf of King George to offer the Prince payment of his debts in return for a promise on his part not to carry out "*son dessein connu.*"

On the very night when Guy Dickens returned to Berlin, we are told, he secured an interview with the anxious Prince. Katte, the Prince's accomplice, conducted him stealthily to the gateway of the Castle where he was met by Frederick while Katte kept watch, all three well knowing the risk they ran if discovered. There Dickens delivered the message from the King of England, and there Frederick—true son of his father —cautiously undertook not to fly from Potsdam if the King of Prussia left him there. But he avoided giving a definite promise not to escape from any other locality, he stated his liabilities at double their true figure, he secured freedom from debt and money in hand, and—he continued his preparations for flight !

Hotham was doubtless aware of the dangerous interview taking place in the shadow of the old gateway ; but his thoughts were more occupied with a matter, to him, of greater moment. Besides the welcome tidings that he was shortly to return to England, Captain Dickens had brought for him from St. James's a treasure in comparison with which all else sank into insignificance. An original letter intercepted from Grumkow to Reichenbach had at last been retained by the British Government, and at last lay in Hotham's possession. With what satisfaction he received this weapon so long desired may be imagined. The precious document was brief—only one page was covered by writing. The autograph was all but illegible—tortuous and difficult to unravel as Grumkow himself. But its authorship was incontestable ; its contents such as Hotham believed must at last carry conviction even to the stolid brain of Frederick William ; and its influence at such a juncture might be incalculable.

Immediately upon hearing of the return of the messenger from England, the King of Prussia granted an interview to

Hotham, which took place on July 9th, and lasted four hours. Perplexed at a new development of the situation, the irresolute monarch, who neither wished to terminate nor to comply with the proposals of King George, was more than ever unable to come to a decision. Finally, seizing at any loophole for further delay, he declared that the marriage of Wilhelmine to the Prince of Wales was with him a point of honour ; as for his son, when the time arrived he would doubtless prefer an English Princess to any other, and the marriage should be celebrated, at the latest, within ten years. This reply Hotham was to take back to England.

The time-limit had been reduced by two years ; this, then, was the sole result of the protracted mediation, of the pleadings of Dickens, the concessions of George ! And even so, was Frederick William sincere ? Who shall say ? Ten more years of torment and humiliation for his hated heir, ten more years of procrastination for himself, ten more years in which the affairs of Europe should mature—and then—well, matters might decide themselves.

For the present it was a long way off, that ten years' limit of which he spoke ; yet even with this unsatisfactory pronouncement the negotiations seemed actually to approach a definite completion more nearly than had ever previously been the case.

But that same evening, after the interview with Hotham, the Devil-Diplomatists, according to their time-honoured practice, sowed mistrust in the mind of their Royal master. Amid the smoke of their evening pipes, and doubtless after the fumes of wine had as usual clouded the judgment of the King, Grumkow told him that in the first proposition, the postponement of Wilhelmine's marriage, England was deliberately attempting to play fast and loose with him. If in the future she required to make use of His Prussian Majesty, she would do so ; if her policy did not require him, he would go to the wall. Frederick William at once veered round. He was enraged to think that he had so nearly been made the tool of England's perfidy ; and it was in no amicable frame of mind that he received Sir Charles Hotham on the morrow.

Hotham for his part came to this his final interview light of heart and full of confidence. It was now July 10th, and his

mission had extended over many weary weeks. Eagerly he anticipated his return to England ; and the conclusion of his negotiation, if not so entirely satisfactory as could have been wished, was not wholly a failure. But more than all, within his grasp, for the present safely hidden away, was that precious document which, in proving conclusively the treason of the King's chief adviser, might yet turn the scale and leave the English Ambassador triumphant in the hour of departure. Hotham had determined to conclude his mission by a master-stroke.

It was midday when he entered the palace with Guy Dickens, whom he had come to present as the British Minister about to succeed Dubourgay. Frederick William received the credentials of the new Ambassador with outward civility, and for a quarter of an hour the conversation drifted into desultory channels. At last Hotham, considering the moment propitious, took the step for which he had so long been waiting.

" As General Grumkow has denied that he is the author of the letters I handed your Majesty," he announced, " I have received orders from the King, my master, to place in the hands of your Majesty an original letter from the General." He drew the precious document from his pocket—with its peculiar tortuous writing, its brief, damning evidence—and held it towards the King. Frederick William, scarcely realising all it purported, took it from him, but as the King's glance fell on the well-known writing, in a lightning-flash there was brought home to him the unpleasant conviction that that little scrap of paper in his hand proved him to be a dupe and a fool. And the anger of Frederick William blazed forth. The restraint which he was so little wont to exercise forsook him. He forgot that he could not with impunity treat the Ambassador of England as he had treated his own son, his judges, his family, and his subjects. " Monsieur," he stormed, " *j'ai eu assez de ces choses-là !* " and abruptly leaving the room, he slammed the door upon the astonished ambassadors.

In Hotham's subsequent dispatch he related the incident as above, treating it with a reticence which encouraged Carlyle to doubt the full extent of the King's ill-behaviour on that memorable occasion ; but the more explicit account preserved among the Hotham muniments, and coinciding as it does with

the account written by the Princess Wilhelmine, unquestionably may be accepted as correct. This relates—

"H.M. the King of Prussia . . . was offended at the message which Sir Charles delivered. He burst into a furious fit of passion . . . and threw the letter in the face of the ambassador, *raising his foot as if he meant to kick him. Sir Charles stepped back, and laid his hand upon his sword.* The King retired in anger, clapping the door after him with the utmost violence. Sir Charles on his part withdrew, indignant at the gross affront which had been offered him as representative of his Britannic Majesty and shocked at so great a violation of his sanctity of character and privilege as an Ambassador of England. He called together all the foreign Ministers, and, bitterly complaining of the insult which his Master had received, declared his fixed determination to return to England."[1]

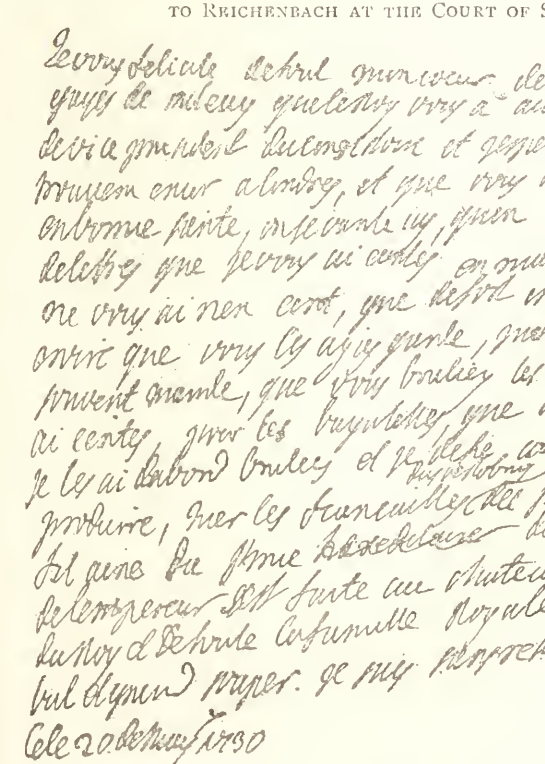
Where (asks Carlyle) is the Original Letter? Ask some Minute reader. Minute readers the *ipsissmum corpus* of it is lost to mankind. . . . It (has) no date of its own, we say, though, by internal evidence and light of *Fassmann*, it is conclusively datable "Berlin, May 20th," if anybody cares to date it. . . . Prussian Dryasdust is expected to give it in Facsimile, one day—surely no British Under-Secretary will exercise an unwise discretion and forbid him that pleasure!

But Carlyle need not have feared that the publication of this curious document would be prohibited. Hotham in his dispatch descriptive of the incident in which it played so important a part, expressly states that after Frederick William had left the room—"*I took the letter that he had thrown upon the floor.*" It returned in Hotham's keeping to England,

[1] "That . . . Majesty answered explosive . . . pitched the new specimen away, and stormily whirled out with a slam of the door," writes Carlyle. "That he stamped with his foot is guessable. That he 'lifted his foot as if to kick the Hon. English Excellency' which the English Excellency never could have stood, but must have died on the spot—of this though several Books have copied it from Wilhelmine, there is no vestige of evidence; and the case is bad enough without this." Carlyle overlooks the fact that the strongest evidence for the accuracy of such a version of the incident was that it was in accordance with the character of Frederick William; moreover, that such outrageous conduct towards the sacred person of an ambassador alone makes plausible the extent to which Hotham resented the affront, and which would not have been justifiable had Frederick William merely cast the obnoxious letter upon the floor and left the room. (Compare *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, page 120.)

whence it had already journeyed, and for nigh upon two centuries it has reposed peacefully among the family muniments of that Ambassador Extraordinary. There it lies to-day, that yellowing paper which the Devil-Diplomatist of Prussia once sent to his spy in England; which the Minister Newcastle intercepted and conveyed to his Royal Master; which George II fingered thoughtfully, then writing—"*Yes, send it,*" decreed that it should go back with Captain Guy Dickens to Berlin greatly to gladden the heart of the "Knight Hotham." There it lies—that paper which a mad monarch once flung into the face of an insulted Ambassador; which decided the fate of two Royal marriages and God knows what besides between two great nations,—that paper of ill-omen which, after the passing of generations, by a strange chance has again come to light at a crisis big with destiny.

FACSIMILE OF THE INTERCEPTED LETTER SENT BY THE MINISTER GRUMKOW TO REICHENBACH AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S.



[Je vous felicite de tout mon cœur de l'augmentation de Gages de mil ecus que le Roy vous a accorde, avec le letre de vice president du Consistoire, et jespere que celle cy vous trouvera encor a londres, et que vous debarqueres bientost en bonne sante, on se vante icy quon a des originaux de lettres que je vous ai ecrites en main, quoyque je ne vous ai rien ecrit, que de fort innocent, je ne puis croire que vous les ayiez garde, puisque vous maves souvent mande, que vous bruliez les lettres que je vous ai ecrites, pour les bagatelles que vous m'avez ecrites je les ai dabord brulees et je defie au diable de les produire, Hier les fiancailles (die verlobung) du prince de beven fil aine du Prince de beven Feldmarsch[all] de l'empereur s'est faite au chateau au grand contentement du Roy et de toute la famille Royale, il y a eu [un] bal et grand souper je suis sans reserve tout a vous. Cele. 20 de May, 1730.]

A harmless letter this, to the ignorant reader, nevertheless so damning in its insisted innocence that, when dispatching it to George II, Newcastle had written in regard to it—"*It seems so material acknowledging all the other originals, and shows such an apprehension lest they should have been stopped*, that I most humbly submit it to your Majesty whether it may not be proper to stop this original letter." And in sooth it had proved a greater firebrand than Newcastle even can have anticipated. Within an hour of its reception by the Prussian King, the news of what had occurred sped through Berlin. The tale lost nothing in the telling. Wilhelmine heard it, and uncertain whether to rejoice or lament at the escape of wedlock with the vicious Prince of Wales, trembled for what might be in store for herself and her brother. Frederick the unhappy Crown Prince heard it, and read in it the end to his cherished dreams, the destruction of that romance which alone had lent a ray of brightness to his intolerable existence. Meanwhile Hotham, immediately upon reaching his own house, sent a letter to Frederick William announcing that, to his regret, after what had just passed at the audience—when he had done nothing but execute an order of the King his Master—he was compelled to inform His Prussian Majesty of the obligation he was under to send a special messenger to London to convey an account of "so surprising a circumstance." He

therefore begged that post-horses might at once be provided for that messenger and for himself.

Two hours after the receipt of this letter by the King, the Minister Borch arrived in haste bearing an invitation for Hotham to dine with His Prussian Majesty, and begging him to have a little patience and all would be smoothed over. But vainly did the Friend of all Men plead with the insulted Envoy. Then, and through the days which followed, one letter from Borch succeeded another, each waxing more conciliatory in tone—more apologetic—but each as ineffectual as the rest.

"Since you are absolutely determined to depart," he at last wrote despairingly, "without even taking leave of His Majesty, my Sovereign, who has overwhelmed you with civilities during your stay here, I herewith send you an order for as many post horses as you may require. I am vexed that you will not listen to your true friends, among whom I am the foremost, being with all my heart, Monsieur——" etc.

But in adhering thus rigidly to a course of action calculated finally to frustrate the long-protracted negotiations of his embassy, Hotham was aware that, despite the representation of the suave Borch, the incident was already public property. With the attention of Europe about to be directed to the occurrence, it was imperative to sustain the dignity of England, and in the course which he adopted he felt confident that he would be upheld by his Sovereign. He had had his instructions in the first instance. "*If he* (*the King of Prussia*) *should fly out at any time into expressions not becoming our Minister to hear, you will support our Honour and Dignity with Resolution and Firmness.*" Never must it be said that the Corporal of Potsdam had with impunity insulted the Majesty of Great Britain. Frederick William had behaved badly, and Frederick William must be punished.

Meantime unspeakably did the Royal culprit, possibly for the first time in his life, repent that momentary ebullition of temper by which he had placed himself irretrievably in the wrong. Wilhelmine relates that "he had no sooner reached his own room than he began bitterly to regret what he had done, foreseeing the result. He was in perfect despair. The

Queen was informed of what had occurred. . . . It is needless to say how greatly distressed she was at it. At last we went to dinner. The King spoke little, and seemed very much put out. As soon as dinner was over, he sent for the Danish and Dutch Envoys, and asked their aid as mediators between him and Hotham." (Hotham, it will be remembered, had already given them his version of what had occurred.) "During the rest of this day, which was spent in perpetual 'goings and comings,' the King did nothing but torment my mother by saying that all negociations with England were broken off. . . . As the King became aware that his endeavours to pacify Hotham had been unavailing, he now desired the two Envoys to offer him an ample apology. . . ."[1] Yet all in vain! Accustomed as was Frederick William to vent unhesitatingly every passing mood on defenceless victims, the recognition must have come somewhat in the nature of a surprise that he had at last met with defiance, that he had attacked where the blow had rebounded upon himself. It was annoying, too, to reflect that his conduct would be freely criticised and condemned by the Courts of Europe. "No doubt," as Lavisse points out, "Hotham had departed from the lines of strict diplomatic conventionality in attacking, as he had done, a Minister of the Prussian Court, but the question at stake was a family matter, a marriage, which was being wrecked by treachery. He thought that he could unmask the traitor." But the crucial consideration from which there was no appeal was that, in acting as he had done, Hotham was but obeying, as obey he was bound to, the explicit instructions of the Sovereign whom he represented; and it would be patent to all that to insult a friendly monarch in the person of his plenipotentiary was an unpardonable offence against the laws of nations.

Moreover, like a spoilt child who despises what is within his grasp and craves the unattainable, no sooner did Frederick William see the alliance with England slipping from him, than he desired it—temporarily, perhaps—but nevertheless ardently. Like a child, too, he admitted his fault plaintively: "My temper got the better of me. I was in a bad humour, and when that happens I must relieve my feelings." He even

[1] *Memoirs of the Margravine of Beireuth*, pages 120–3.

added—" Had it been a letter from the King of England which I had treated thus, well and good ; there would have been some sense in being so angry. But the letter of a porter like Grumkow ! What is there to be said ? Am I not master to do as I please ? The English are very touchy ! "[1]

But there was one to whom the episode, despite its undoubted element of comedy, continued to present an aspect of unalloyed tragedy. From the first moment when the news had reached the Crown Prince through the Danish Minister, in whom his father and Hotham had alike confided, he had recognised that the decision of the British Envoy, if adhered to, involved on his own part putting into execution that *dessein connu* so long discussed and postponed. For Frederick there would then be but two alternatives. On the one hand renunciation of his cherished romance and the continuance of a life of misery, on the other that desperate scheme of attempted flight which must inevitably spell disaster for those dearest to him, and which, if unsuccessful, could entail for himself horrors impossible to gauge.

One hope alone remained to him. He personally would plead his cause with the British Envoy, hitherto sympathetic. It is said that at the instigation of the Danish Minister who compassionated him, and with the approval of his mother and his sisters, he made a last appeal to Hotham to accept the apology offered by his father ; indeed Wilhelmine purports to give a brief letter which the Prince thus indited and which Carlyle quotes, not without misgiving, together with the answer made thereto by Hotham. But the true document, hurriedly written by Frederick on receipt of the tidings which confounded him, showing by its penmanship and its wording the agitation and haste of the writer—a pathetic human document palpitating with despair, appears to have been unknown to Wilhelmine, as to Thomas Carlyle and historians of a later date. It remained in the possession of Hotham, a memento, together with the letter of Grumkow, of his strange mission to the strange Court of Prussia and—like that other document of different import—only to-day to be presented to the public for the first time in all the piteousness of its sad appeal :—

[1] Sauveterre, July 15th, 1730.

Sieur, je viens d'aprendre dens ce moment que vous voulez partir, je ses la reson pourquoi et tout, mais je vous prie au nom de Dieu ne renversez pas tout ce que vous auez acomodez jusq'a present, le Roy ce repent exstremement de tout ce qui c'est pace, et je suis persuade que tout jra le mieux du monde pourvu que vous voulez rester, pencez y, encore Monsieur il y va du bonheur de la familye de votre Roy car ce qui regarde sa sœur le regarde ausi, je vous prie par tout ce qu'il y a de Seins ne prenez point si haut, tache de racomoder tout a' l amiable et pences que c'est votre amie qui vous enprie et que vous me metez le poigniar au cœur ci vous rompez avec ma Sœur, tenez vous me rendre le plus grand service du monde ci vous ne rompez point cete afaire, mon dieu paser L'histoire de la lettre sous silence, vous avez les promeces en mein tout est a la vellye d'etre heureux encore une foix au non de la parolle que vous m'avez donez pour faire tout ce que vous pouvez pour faire reusir ce maryaje ne prenez point cela ci haut enfein reste et racomodez tout, je vous en prie au non de tout ce qui vous peut flechir, adieu.

FREDERIC P. R.

P.S. Je suis persuade que vous ferez reflection a ceci, et que ma lettre ne sera pas ecrite pour rien.

P.S. Notre Roy a dit aujourdui a la Reine qu'il ne Souhaitait mieux que le maryage de ma sœur, il m'a conte ce qui c'est pase hier et dit qu'il seroit au desespoir de voir tout rompu. Au non de tout les dieux monsieur ne gatez don rien que la regret du Roy vous tiene lieu de satisfaction.[1]

But Hotham was not to be beguiled. As the fretful repentance of Frederick William had failed to shake his resolution, so did the plight of the unhappy Prince, and in his answer to the latter he pointed out anew the true reason of this obduracy —that it was not his personal pride which was at stake, but that of his Royal master :—

Answer of Sir Charles Hotham to H.R.H. Frederick, Crown Prince of Prussia

MONSEIGNEUR,

Parmi un grand nombre de Chagrins que j'ay eu pendant le Cours de ma Négociation, Je supplie Votre Altesse Royale de croire que ce n'est pas un des moindres de me voir hors d'état d'obeir aux ordres d'ont elle vient de m'honorer. Mais

[1] Hotham muniments.

comme dans une affaire de cette nature qui regarde l'honneur du Roy mon Maitre, je ne puis pas suivre mon propre Mouvement, J'espère que Votre Altesse Royale ne me blamera pas en faisant ce à quoi mon Caractère et mon Devoir m'obligent indispensablement.

Il faut pourtant ésperer, que comme le Roy lui même est persuadé de l'irregularité de cette Affaire, qu'il prendera les mesures necessaires pour que cette Affaire n'ait pas des Suites plus facheuses, et que la Negociation don't j'êtois chargée sera renouée avant qu'il soit long tems.

J'ai l'honneur d'être

etc., etc.

Faint hope with which to combat the anguish of an unhappy lover, the torment of a wretched victim! This answer to the appeal of the Prince must have seemed to its recipient like a death-blow. Frederick had written as a friend to a friend, he had poured out his soul in passionate pleading; and Hotham answered as an official bound by courtly etiquette, by rules—by restrictions against which the desperation of youth dashed itself in vain. The last word had been spoken, the final resolution taken; there was no moving the implacable Englishman. Two days only after the disastrous incident that had closed his negotiation, on Wednesday, July 12th, the British Envoy shook the dust of Berlin from his feet for ever.

And so Hotham, (relates Carlyle) spirited, judicious Englishman, rolls off homewards, a few hours after his courier—and retires honourably into private life, steady there thenceforth. He has not been successful in Berlin: surely his Negociation is now *out* in all manner of senses! Long ago (to use our former ignoble figure) he had "laid down the bellows, though there was still smoke traceable": but by now, by this Grumkow letter, he has, as it were, struck the *poker* through the business; and that dangerous manœuvre, not proving successful, has been fatal and final! Queen Sophie and certain others may still flatter themselves; but it is evident the Negociation is at last complete. What may lie in Flight to England and rash, desperate measures which Queen Sophie trembles to think of, we do not know; but by regular negociation this thing can never be.

A few days later Hotham was back in London. "After a tedious passage of three days at sea," he relates, "I landed at

Harwich on Saturday and arrived here on Monday. The next day I waited upon the King at Windsor, and found him excessively incensed at the late extraordinary Proceedings of his Prussian Majesty. He did me the honour to tell me I had acted perfectly right in resenting the thing in the manner I had done, and that he approved of my Behaviour in every particular, and said he would immediately order the Prussian Minister to depart out of his Dominions."

But Hotham combated this hasty decision which would have involved an immediate rupture between England and Prussia. He assured the King that " in the temper I left his Prussian Majesty I did not doubt but he would give immediate satisfaction for what had happened, and that he had so far recovered his Senses before I came away that he said he would give directions to Count Dagenvelt[1] to sett out for England forthwith with proper Instructions to accomodate this Matter to his Majesty's entire Satisfaction." So the irate King decided to await the apologetic representations of the Prussian culprit ; but meantime both the thoughts of George and of his late Envoy must have turned with foreboding to the probability of " *les Suites plus facheuses* " at which Hotham had hinted in his guarded reply to the Crown Prince's letter.

That sequel is well known, and concerns the present history only in so far as Hotham personally was connected with it. Of the Prince's desperate attempt to escape while journeying with his father, of the betrayal of the project by his page on August 6th, of the subsequent arrest and imprisonment of Frederick on the charge of being a deserter, and of all the brutal treatment meted out to him till his reason and his life were at stake, many have written fully. Reports of these events sped to England and must have filled Hotham with a horror which was shared throughout the civilised world. " All over Europe," in fact, " nothing was talked of save the cruelties of the King of Prussia." But so recently had Hotham been in the midst of the little Court, so vividly was it still present to him, that he could realise the situation as it was given to few outside the Kingdom of Frederick William to realise it. That mad monarch persistently asserted that in

[1] The Minister appointed to succeed Reichenbach at the Court of St. James.

his son's attempt at flight lay concealed a plot against his own throne and person, and when no proof of this was forthcoming, his rage increased. Hotham, as one who had abetted the Prince's scheme, came in for a full share of His Majesty's vituperation. The Dutch Minister Ginckel related that, in September, meeting the King on parade, the latter after discussing indifferent topics, suddenly " with fury blazing in his eyes exclaimed—' You know what has happened ? ' and in a flood of curses and oaths mentioned by name the Prince's accomplices, *France, England, Sir Charles Hotham and Guy Dickens.*" He invited Ginckel to come that evening to hear more. The things that the Dutchman heard that night in the smoking-room he never dared repeat. He would not have believed it was possible for any human being to form such impious and execrable designs " as those which were told to him in confidence." [1] Further, Grumkow and Seckendorf " credited in the opinion of Europe with having been largely instrumental in bringing matters to such a desperate pass," were triumphant, while " their adversaries were sorely smitten. . . . The King loaded the two accomplices with declarations of his esteem. All who surrounded him, he said, seemed to him suspicious, with the exception of Grumkow who alone remained faithful."—This was the sole result of Hotham's carefully attested revelations. Cnyphausen was disgraced ; Borch dismayed ; Queen Sophie, in yet more profound tribulation, openly referred to her husband as a madman, while she appealed more despairingly to the King of England to aid her in her misery and degradation.

Meanwhile Guy Dickens, that ambassador of Hotham's creation, continued to furnish him with information of all which took place at the Court of Prussia. On September 11th he wrote privately from Berlin :—

You will have seen by my letters of the 5th and 7th to my Lord Harrington the most Melancholy and deplorable situation of things here. How all this will end is very easy to determine if means be not found to ruin Grumkow, for as to gaining him, surely our Court will never think of that expedient. It would be deceiving themselves to imagine that Wretch would make any other use of the least dispositions we should show that way,

[1] Lavisse, *Youth of Frederick the Great*, page 275.

but to effect the sooner and with the greater security his infamous designs against the Prince and Royal Family. Shew the cowardly villain a cane, and he will tremble, but good words will make him bold and enterprising.

Both you and I are mentioned in Katte's depositions, but the manner is reported so many different ways that I know not which to give credit to. . . .

Grumkow gives out that the K. of Prussia will ask my recall. If he *does*, my great comfort is that it is not for acting the part either of a Grumkow or Reichenbach !

In a letter dated *Berlin Sept* 25 *New Style* Dickens added further information respecting the implication of Hotham in the affairs of the Prussian Court :—

I find by several particulars wch Messrs Grumkow & Seckendorf have told to Mons Klinkenstrom & others, that the Prince has declared everything that passed between him & me, both at the Camps in Saxony & here in town, after my return from England.

Lieut. Katte has even discovered what he knows concerning the paper given to S^r^ Charles Hotham two days before he left Berlin.[1] I was the more surprised to hear this last particular mentioned in that Lieut. Katte had found means after he was in arrest to write to me with a pencil intreating me to be very cautious, not to let anything drop of that affair, since he should certainly loose his head if it was known. But as the torturing engines were constantly set before him at every examination, 'tis very well if he has not been made to say more than truth, especially if Grumkow has given him to understand 'twas the only way to make him his friend.[2]

From time to time, too, Dickens furnished any particulars which reached him of the condition of the unhappy Prince, in the prison at Cüstrin. " Iron bars have been put before the Prince's window," he wrote on September 30th, " and the walls of his room made thicker. . . . Since I writ what goes before, I had a billet from the Danish Secretary acquainting me that he had heard the Prince was very ill. . . ." And in despair he concludes—" I must always agree in the Opinion with our friends here that unless Heaven interposes there is no other method but force to save this family from ruin." On October

[1] Probably the letter quoted on page 228. [2] Hotham muniments.

14th he hears that the Prince has been found " very weak, lean, and pale, and having all the Symptoms of a person in decay " ; while a week later, on October 21st, he adds a yet more deplorable account :—

On Tuesday Genl Levenhorn returned from Wusterhausen. The next morning I waited upon him, but it being his Postday, he desired I would excuse him if he could not see me, and that he would come to me in the afternoon, which he did accordingly. He then told me that he was struck with horror of the account his friends at Wusterhausen had given him of the Prince's Situation, that besides a full confirmation of what he had heard here in town concerning the Prince's ill State of health, they had told him his Royl Highs was allmost eat up with vermin, he not being allowed to have so much as a Comb to keep his head clean, that he had not been shaved ever since his first confinement, was obliged to make his own fire himself, & in short had not the necessarys wch are allowed to the most common and most profligate malefactor.

Gen[l] Levenhorn told me also that during the two days he was at Wusterhan he used his utmost endeavours to discover both in his conversations with the King & by the means of his acquaintances there when and in what manner there was a probability the sufferings of this unfortunate young Prince would have an end, & that by all he could collect he was well assured the event must be tragical, not that he believed the King would cause his son to be put to death, since the fear of the consequences would prevent him ; but as his Prussian Masty saw in the person of the Prince that of a formidable rival, the same fear would never suffer him to set him at liberty, therefore the Prince must inevitably perish, it being impossible for him to hold out long under such cruel and inhuman treatment ; and that all his Pruss[n] Mty's thoughts were bent upon punishment & revenge, and not once upon mercy & forgiveness.[1]

With profound compassion Hotham must have pictured that once handsome Prince of pleasing address reduced to straits so dire ; still more must he have lamented the events which followed—the court martial at which Frederick, Prince no longer but plain Lieutenant-Colonel Friedrich, was put upon his trial as a deserter ; the persistent manner in which the King sought to encompass his son's death ; the arbitrary

[1] Hotham muniments.

decree by which, in defiance of the finding of the court martial, he commanded the execution of Lieutenant Katte. Vividly, likewise, must Hotham have pictured that scene which lives through the centuries, of Katte, dearest friend and accomplice of Frederick—Katte, in life ignoble, in death heroic, being shot in full view of the heart-broken Prince who fainted at the shocking spectacle which he was compelled to witness. And by and by, when these horrors were overpast, Hotham must have learnt, too, how Wilhelmine, as the price of her brother's freedom, had wedded the Margrave of Beireuth, and how Frederick, with the freshness and beauty of his untarnished youth vanished for ever, was at last restored to the Royal favour, intermittent and autocratic as of yore, which he clinched in 1733 by dutifully accepting a bride of his father's choosing.[1]

All this to the ex-Envoy in far-away England must have come like the echo of a dream which was sped ; while possibly of greater interest to him was the last expiring death-knell of that project of the double marriage in which he had played such a prominent and unavailing part. For while the fate of Frederick and Wilhelmine yet hung in the balance, His Excellency Guy Dickens had reported to St. James's the wrathful pronouncement of His Majesty of Prussia that "*whilst he lived he would not suffer one of his children to go to England, nor any one of their Majestys to come hither*" ; and under date September 25th Dickens further recounted the following incident :—

About seven this morning I received a Message from Mons. Borch, desiring me to come to him at half an hour past eight. When I came I found him and Mons. Thulemeyer setting at a Table, and Papers before them. Mons. Borch ordered me a Chair, and then taking up a Paper & shewing me that it was the King of Prussia's own handwriting said :—" Monsieur, Je vous ay envoyé chercher par l'ordre du Roy, mon Maître, pour vous declarer en son nom, qu'on ne devoit pas songer à aucun marriage entre la Famille Royale l'angleterre et celle de prusse, soit double, soit simple, et vous pouvez, Monsieur, faire l'usage que vous jugez à propos de cette Declaration."

On receipt of which, St. James's, in inexpressible indigna-

[1] He married the Princess Elizabeth of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel.

tion, sent crushing and sarcastic reply, conveyed likewise—not direct to His Majesty of Prussia with whom the King of England no longer deigned to hold communication—but *viâ* Guy Dickens to the Minister Borch :—

The King (of England) had no thought of any marriage except at the seeking of the King of Prussia, and from the affection which he bore for the family of the Queen, his sister, and for the advantage of the Protestant religion. As that Prince (of Prussia) has changed his opinion, let him change as he pleases,—the King will trouble no further respecting anything that concerns him or his family. And if the King your master had always shown so much indifference upon this subject, such Declarations as these, on the one side or the other, would have been unnecessary.

With which incontrovertible statement it will be seen that King George had the best of the argument ; and in view of which satisfactory conclusion Hotham probably dismissed the episode finally from his thoughts. Yet in 1733 he may have heard with a brief renewal of interest that the death had taken place of that imperturbable monarch Auguste the Strong, together with the rumour that, at the dissolution of His Polish Majesty, Grumkow, then far away in Prussia, by a fresh departure in Devil-Diplomacy had proclaimed the event, declaring that he had seen the ghost of the deceased Sovereign —surely a wraith of substantial proportions.

But ere this, matters of more personal moment probably filled the thoughts of Hotham. On January 7th, 1731, he had received the command of the Royal Irish Regiment of Foot, and on May 13th, 1735, he was appointed Colonel of the First Troop of Horse Grenadier Guards ; while in 1733 there had come into effect that unacknowledged relationship, before referred to, between himself and the Royal master he had served so well.

In 1730 Lord Chesterfield had returned from The Hague, and had been made Lord Steward of the King's household ; but later, owing to circumstances to which we shall refer in a subsequent chapter, he fell into disfavour and was dismissed from Court. In that moment of disillusion he returned to his first love Lady Walsingham ; and Melusina thus meeting him again in middle age, found her heart faithful to his memory,

and did not hesitate to marry that lover of her youth at the moment when he was in disgrace with his Sovereign and with his former political party. The wedding took place in 1733, and the bridegroom, among other attentions to his bride, instituted against George II a suit for £40,000 reported to have been left to her by George I and annexed by George II. Though the case never came to trial, Horace Walpole states that half the money was paid. Yet despite the animosity which consequently subsisted between the King and his unacknowledged brother-in-law, the fact of Hotham's near relationship and close friendship with that discarded courtier did not militate against his own favour with his Sovereign, and he continued constant in his attendance as Groom of the Bedchamber.

Meantime in his private life Hotham had fresh cause for happiness. In July, 1731, there was born to him a daughter who was named Gertrude after her mother, and in 1734 there came into existence another daughter who was named Melusina after her new aunt Lady Chesterfield. Finally, in 1735, there was at last born a long-wished-for son and heir who was forthwith named Charles,[1] alike after his father and after his elder brother, that babe who had closed his infant life ten years earlier.

But with the gladness brought by the birth of this heir there came to Hotham an unexpected sorrow, for about this date, although still in the prime of his manhood, he must have begun to discover signs of his own failing health. Yet, like his father, he "bore pain, when not to be removed by human means, with uncommon fortitude," and during the lingering illness which followed he displayed a courage which was only surpassed by the manner in which he met the end. He was attended by the celebrated Dr. Mead,[2] a physician who had enhanced a previously high reputation by the correctness of his verdict when Queen Anne lay dying. On that occasion, while the rest of the faculty, perhaps for political reasons, had

[1] It is curious that in Westminster School an entry states that he was admitted there in October, 1743, *at the age of ten*, thus indicating that he was born in 1733; but this is erroneous according to his age stated on his coffin and other evidence.

[2] Richard Mead, M.D., F.R.S. (1673–1754), a celebrated Whig physician and man of many friends.

persisted that the Queen was in no immediate danger, Mead, a staunch Whig, had confidently announced her approaching decease, and the event had proved the accuracy of his opinion in marked contrast to that of his colleagues. Yet in the case of Sir Charles the reverse occurred and the learned physician was curiously at fault.

Dr. Mead first put his patient to the most excruciating tortures by a dose of cantharides to be taken inwardly, a prescription which filled with astonishment those who were told to prepare it. He then, having carefully inspected the exhausted invalid, pronounced him to be entirely out of danger and left him with every sign of satisfaction. A few minutes after, however, a humbler surgeon and apothecary arriving, formed a totally different opinion ; so much so that they considered it necessary that Sir Charles should be at once informed that if he had any affairs to settle no time was to be lost, *as he had not above an hour to live !*

Such an announcement, so totally unexpected under the circumstances, was calculated to overset the long-tried bravery of the sick man ; but although he received the news with some surprise, his composure remained unshaken. " The notice is rather sudden considering Dr. Mead's assurances so very lately," he observed quietly ; " but since it is so, let my wife and children be called in." He took a calm and affectionate leave of his family, and then leaning back in his chair, breathed his last.

Thus at the age of forty-five, on January 15th, 1738, Sir Charles Hotham lay dead in his house in Stratton Street, Piccadilly, and ten days later his body was buried at Dalton according to his will, in which he also positively ordered that the whole expenses of his funeral should not exceed £150.

Two years subsequently, far away in Berlin, there expired, after tortures less heroically borne, that monarch to whom the dead Envoy had once been sent on a futile mission, Frederick William, the second King of Prussia. Little had that autocrat dreamed when, in 1730, he fixed the time-limit of ten years in answer to the representations of the British Ambassador, that Fate itself had set that period to his tyranny, and that at the date which he named for the termination of

his son's durance, Death would ensure that he ratified his decree!

With his passing, for us there sinks finally back into the silence whence we conjured it that little Court of long ago over which he ruled with a cruelty bred of madness. No more the puppets strut across their miniature stage with an immeasurable self-importance. No more are we conscious of the babel of tongues, the clash of schemes, the intrigues, the lying, the heart-burnings and the heart-breakings, the note of vice triumphant, the plaint of integrity oppressed. Over all the stillness of the grave has fallen; and to-day the sole tangible result of that mission of the long-dead Envoy to the long-dead King is to be found in the packet of yellowing papers consigned to oblivion among the Hotham muniments.

Yet even as we lay these back once more in the dust whence we unearthed them, they hold for us of to-day a strange significance. Vanished indeed are those Prussian intriguers of a bygone century—that phantom King and his phantom Court; extinct the lies which they fashioned so glibly, the plots which they hatched so arduously; yet still is the cannon of Frederick William echoing in our ears, still is the madness of Frederick William torturing a pitiful world, still we hear the tramp of the legions which he created, we see Austria and Prussia bound by a link at which one secretly chafes, and still is England the antagonist of both!

CHAPTER XI

A FRIEND OF WHITEFIELD

ON the death of her husband Lady Gertrude Hotham was thus left with a family of four children, the eldest of whom, her daughter Caroline, was under ten years of age, and the youngest, her only surviving son, was a babe of little over two summers.

Possibly on account of the constitutional delicacy of her children Lady Gertrude determined to live in the country, and took up her residence in Kensington, where the air was considered particularly salubrious, so much so that, at that date, it was a favourite resort for invalids or persons desiring to recuperate from the effects of a too-prolonged sojourn in London. In this healthy locality she acquired a charming home, Campden House, a fine old building which, dating from the early part of the sixteenth century, was both spacious and picturesque. Situated on the ground rising towards Campden Hill, its mullioned windows and tall turrets commanded a view of the village of Kensington nestling below; while within, the wainscoted rooms had ceilings richly decorated, tall carved fireplaces, and lattices, in the deep bays, of stained glass bearing the arms of early owners. In the great dining-room tradition related that the merry monarch, Charles II, used often to sup with Lord Campden; while at a later date the Princess of Denmark, afterwards Queen Anne, dwelt there; and up and down the green spaces before its windows her little son, the Duke of Gloucester, drilled his tiny soldiers and dreamed in vain of a day when he should lead real armies to a real battle.

In truth the supreme joy of Campden House lay in its beautiful old garden. The massive steps and great stone

parapets of the terrace looked down over velvet lawns and brilliant flowers, over spaces so sheltered and sunny that the wild olive flourished there and a caper tree produced fruit for nearly a century. The only drawback to the lovely spot was its inaccessibility at certain seasons of the year owing to the terrible condition of the country which stretched between it and London. Where the land was low-lying, at times this resembled a quagmire, and hard by at Kensington Palace Mrs. Howard complained bitterly that she had a crop of mushrooms flourishing in her bedroom. Lord Hervey, writing in November, 1736, remarks how "the road between this place (Kensington) and London is grown so infamously bad, that we live here in the same solitude as we should do if cast on a rock in the middle of the ocean, and all the Londoners tell us there is between them and us a great impassable gulf of mud."[1]

In her country seclusion, however, Lady Gertrude found ample occupation in the care of her young family, to whose welfare she forthwith devoted her existence. Moreover her sympathies were manifold, and from all who came in contact with her gentle nature she won the same toll of affection. Full of thought for others, of love for young and old, even when, later, she became Calvinistic in her religious views, she was never bigoted in principle; she could view life from the standpoint of the careless and gay; she was ready to promote innocent frivolity; she could even feel worldly ambition for the young lives with which she delighted to surround herself. Still more, devoid of the cynicism and affectation of her brother, she had yet, as Horace Walpole points out, "all his wit," and the few letters from her which have survived exhibit a quaint humour which is singularly attractive.

The earliest recollection of little Sir Charles Hotham who, at the age of two, became head of his family, must have been associated with the beautiful garden of Campden House and with the presiding influence there, the mother who befriended all and seemed beloved by all, a gracious presence beneath whose auspices his fairy-like surroundings waxed yet more lovely. But soon there came into his life a fresh element, for there arrived as a visitor in his home a cousin and namesake

[1] *Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, by John, Lord Hervey. (Ed. 1884.) Vol. II, page 362, note 9.

LADY GERTRUDE HOTHAM, NÉE STANHOPE
WIFE OF THE 5TH BARONET
OB. 1775

six years his senior, another Charles Hotham,[1] the eldest son of his uncle Beaumont Hotham, his father's younger brother.[2] This older Charles, whose parents were then living in Scotland, was sent to London in order that he might attend a preparatory school for Westminster, and his holidays were subsequently passed under the motherly care of Lady Gertrude. But in 1742 the parents of the young visitor removed to London, and by and by there came also to Campden House his four younger brothers, John, William, Beaumont and George Hotham, all destined in later life to become distinguished men. The strong, handsome boys made the old pleasaunce ring with their merry voices; and if to Lady Gertrude the spectacle of those fine, healthy sons of her brother-in-law held an element of sadness, she never allowed it to interfere with her affection for her nephews, who came to her house as to a second home. Yet, in painful contrast to his manly cousins, her own little son remained always delicate, and he whose future in life might otherwise have been so brilliant, passed through the early stages of existence shadowed by a great fear—the fear lest he should never attain to that manhood which showed for him so fair a prospect.

But there were other lads who, during those peaceful years, spent happy hours in the old-world garden. Many of these came from Westminster School, to which Sir Charles and his five cousins were eventually destined; and among them was a faithful comrade who had been born the same year as that older Charles—eldest of the five merry brothers. This was young Lord Hastings,[3] the son of Lady Gertrude's great friend Lady Huntingdon,[4] who, ere his boyhood was past, already showed signs of becoming that towards which his ambition tended—a fine gentleman and man of fashion. He was, we are told, "famous at School for the graces which afterwards made him the head of the *ton*";[5] and to the per-

[1] Charles, later Captain, Hotham, afterwards 8th Baronet, eldest son of Beaumont Hotham, Esquire, afterwards 7th Baronet. (See Vol. II.)

[2] Beaumont Hotham was the second son of Sir Charles Hotham, 4th Baronet, by his wife Bridget Gee. He afterwards became 7th Baronet.

[3] Francis, eldest son of Theophilus, 9th Earl of Huntingdon, by his wife Selina. He succeeded his father as 10th Earl of Huntingdon in 1746.

[4] Selina, second daughter and coheir of Washington, Earl Ferrers, m. Theophilus, 9th Earl of Huntingdon. (See page 244.)

[5] *Annals of Westminster School*, by John Sargeaunt (1898).

fection of his manners and address Chesterfield, the past-master in politeness, bore approving witness. Meantime the gossips early remarked that the handsome Francis devoted a very pretty attention to his playmate young Caroline Hotham, the Queen's goddaughter, who was fast growing into a slender damsel of dainty looks and engaging ways.

One holiday the older Charles Hotham, who had already many friends at Westminster School, appears to have brought a merry tale wherewith to regale his cousins in their country seclusion. Little Sir Charles, the babe, was still too young to comprehend it; but, by and by, he was to recall it with very different feelings to those which animated the small narrator.

Shortly after Sir Charles came into existence, in 1736, there had been admitted into the Church a young Deacon, George Whitefield, who, in 1738, preached his first sermon in Gloucester Cathedral with striking effect. It was soon discovered, however, that the new divine had adopted the tenets of the Methodists, so called from their love of order and method, a sect which had recently owed its foundation to the Wesleys at Oxford, and which was regarded askance by Church and State. With the enthusiasm of a fanatic and the eloquence of an orator, the young preacher fearlessly proclaimed the unpopular doctrine, and ere long became recognised as one of its foremost representatives, although differences of opinion on the question of predestination eventually led to his severance from John Wesley.

Determined to be heard, and finding that the clergy systematically barred every means by which he could promulgate his doctrines, one Sunday evening in 1739 young Whitefield forced his way into the pulpit in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, and proceeded to deliver a rousing address. He was promptly locked up by a stalwart sexton in that rostrum of which he had taken unwarrantable possession, and was kept in durance there guarded by six lusty fellows, to the extreme bewilderment of the congregation present, who could not discover whether highwayman, lunatic, or prophet was being subjected to such drastic treatment. The Westminster schoolboys, who always attended divine service in the Abbey, soon learnt what had occurred in the neighbouring

edifice, and a verse in commemoration of the event was afterwards popular among them. It appears that the preacher on that memorable occasion, as well as subsequently, instead of dignifying humanity as the image of the Divine, "proclaimed that man, the chief work of God in this lower world, was by nature *half brute and half devil.*" Consequently Westminster schoolboys sang with gusto the following retort which some wag had suggested should be inscribed upon the preacher's own doorway :—

> Here lives one by nature half brute and half devil.
> Avoid him ye wise, though he speak kind and civil.
> The Devil can seem like an angel of light ;
> And Dogs look demure—the better to bite !

Persecution is the fate of all exponents of a new evangel ; but not for long was Charles Hotham, the small visitor at Campden House, able to make merry there at Whitefield's expense. When the parish churches were denied to him, Whitefield preached in the open air, and soon the force of his personality became a power in the land. Crowds numbering from twenty to thirty thousand flocked to hear him on Moorfields and on Kennington Common, indeed at the latter place on one occasion he relates with pardonable pride, if unconscious *naïveté*—"I believe there were no less than 50,000 people and near forescore coaches, besides a great number of horses !" It is evident that the dauntless preacher was possessed of personal magnetism and a dramatic instinct which furthered his cause where deeper intellectual powers might have failed. Thus his writings lack in interest ; but his speech must have been full of a vivifying power which swept opposition before it. "Mr. Whitefield's face," we are told by an enthusiast, "was a language ; his intonation music, and his action passion." Garrick said of him that he could make men weep and tremble by his varied utterances of the word Mesopotamia,[1]—possibly to him was due the time-honoured legend of the old lady who found so much spiritual consolation in that blessed name. Garrick is also credited with having said, "I would give a hundred guineas if I could only say 'Oh!' like Mr. Whitefield !" Still more, the young divine

[1] *Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, by a member of the Houses of Shirley and Hastings (1850), Vol. II, page 129.

was possessed of a fortunate—or unfortunate—aptitude for convincing his hearers that his remarks, addressed to a multitude at large, were directed against some individual present whose guilty conscience appropriated them personally. The effect occasioned by his exquisite intonation, his impassioned solemnity of manner, upon a congregation already wrought to a pitch of expectation, produced results at times out of all proportion with the means that had evoked them. Some of the stories of the conversions thus effected, told by his biographers without any sense of their ludicrous aspect, reveal a condition of hysteria among his audience difficult to credit. Here is one related in all good faith and gravity :—

A certain publican who had developed a nose highly indicative of his profession, was implored by a converted friend to hear Mr. Whitefield preach at least once, and see if it did not awaken in him a sense of his shortcomings. The publican declined this—to him—undesirable risk, but afterwards learning that the music at the chapel was exceptionally attractive, and having a weakness for sweet harmony, he announced that he would go and listen to this part of the entertainment. "But," quoth he, "while the prayers and the sermon are on, I shall keep my fingers in my ears!"

Accordingly, on the day appointed, he repaired to the chapel and greatly enjoyed the singing; but so soon as the prayers commenced he placed his fingers firmly in his ears and heard not a word. At length Mr. Whitefield ascended the pulpit, and the publican, still determined not to become a listener, settled himself down for a comfortable nap, carefully, however, closing his organs of hearing against all danger till sleep should seal them more effectually. Suddenly, however, there settled upon his rubicund nose a fly which irritated him so excessively that, forgetful of his determination, he clapped his hands upon the offender. At that psychological moment the preacher thundered out his text—"He that hath ears to hear let him hear!" That was sufficient for the impressionable publican. Where arguments and eloquence might have failed, coincidence brought conviction. He listened meekly to the rest of the discourse, pronounced himself converted, and gave up the error of his ways.

A more striking instance of the effect produced upon a

highly-strung audience by the mere enunciation of a text occurred on another occasion when Lady Huntingdon and Lady Gertrude Hotham were both present. Mr. Whitefield had been preaching in Yorkshire where it was the custom, as in many country districts, for the prayers to be read in the church and the sermon to be preached from a scaffold erected for that purpose in the churchyard. At a crowded gathering one day Mr. Whitefield ascended a temporary pulpit of this description, and "casting a look over the multitude, elevated his hands, while in an energetic manner he implored the Divine blessing." He then, with a solemnity peculiarly his own, gave out his text—"*It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after that the judgment.*" Having made an emphatic pause, he was about to proceed, when a wild, terrifying shriek issued from the centre of the congregation. Considerable alarm and confusion ensued, during which Mr. Whitefield waited, and besought the people to remain still. His coadjutor, Mr. Grimshaw, meantime hastened to the spot whence the cry had proceeded, and a moment later was seen pushing his way back through the crowd towards Mr. Whitefield. "Brother Whitefield," he announced solemnly, "you stand among the dead and dying—an immortal soul has just been called to eternity—the destroying angel is passing over the congregation. Cry aloud, and spare not!" The effect of such a sensational incident upon the expectant assembly may be imagined, and it was some time before they became sufficiently composed for Mr. Whitefield again to announce his text. What then was the horror of that over-wrought congregation when a second piercing shriek was heard—this time coming from a spot near where Lady Huntingdon and Lady Gertrude Hotham were seated—and the news swiftly spread that "a second person had fallen a victim to the King of terrors!" It was long before the consternation subsided and the unnerved audience was sufficiently calm to enable Mr. Whitefield to "give indications of his intention to proceed with the service."[1] History does not relate whether he risked giving out his text a third time!

Yet even with the unquestionable dramatic power and genius possessed by the new luminary, it is improbable that

[1] *Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.*

he would have achieved a more prominent position than that of an itinerant preacher of doubtful orthodoxy had he not secured a powerful convert and ally among the fashionable circles of his day.

Selina, Lady Huntingdon, so early as 1739, had become one of the ardent supporters of the new divine; and on her husband's death in 1746 she made him her chaplain. It is said that, over the course of years, she built, or helped to build and endow for him, more than sixty-four chapels; she fought his cause against Church and laity; she even, late in life, carried her championship to the extent of visiting George III and successfully procuring the countenance of that King for her protégé in a joint encounter with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Still more, her influence secured for the young preacher a large following among her personal friends; the example spread; the ridicule, the misapprehension of the worldly was a tonic rather than a deterrent to these self-constituted martyrs; Whitefield's new supporters were sufficiently influential not merely to stem the tide but to turn it; the religious question, from having been excluded from polite conversation, became the prevailing topic of discussion; the young and previously frivolous became drawn into the vortex; revivals became a popular excitement; emotional sermons an attractive novelty; further conversions the aim of every convert. In a word, Methodism became fashionable.

The Scoffer, Horace Walpole, writing to Sir Horace Mann, remarked: "If you ever think of returning to England, you must prepare yourself with methodism, I really believe by that time it will be necessary; this sect increases as fast as almost ever any religious nonsense ever did. Lady Fanny Shirley has chosen this way of bestowing the dregs of her beauty. . . .[1] The Methodists love your big sinners, as proper subjects to work upon—and indeed they have a big harvest."

Selina, Queen of the Methodists, as Horace Walpole dubbed the patroness of the new sect, had always professed the warmest friendship for Lady Gertrude Hotham, and, as already

[1] The niece of Lady Huntingdon, who lived with her aunt. Lord Chesterfield paid her great attention, and she was the subject of his verse in her youth.

indicated, a close intimacy existed between the two families. Left a widow at the very date when Whitefield first began to attract attention, Lady Gertrude before long found a deep consolation in the tenets which had taken such powerful obsession of her friend. Her daughters adopted her new convictions, in which they were encouraged by their affection for Lady Elizabeth[1] and Lady Selina Hastings, both ardent disciples of Whitefield. Sacred concerts, prayer-meetings, and missions were forthwith held alternately at the houses of Lady Huntingdon and Lady Gertrude Hotham, and the latter, as profound in her sincerity as was Lady Huntingdon, brought many new converts to the fold.

Among these, in course of time, was numbered Melusina, Lady Chesterfield. Although she played the rôle of a faithful wife and Lord Chesterfield that of a polite and considerate husband, by an arrangement not uncommon in those days this couple maintained separate establishments. Melusina continued to reside after marriage, as before, with her mother the Duchess of Kendal, whose house adjoined that of Lord Chesterfield; and thus she was entirely at liberty to follow her inclination with regard to the new tenets. Her husband, it is true, although he viewed this unexpected departure on the part of his sister and his wife with well-bred amazement, treated it with his habitual civility. Theophilus, Lord Huntingdon, had been one of his greatest friends; Francis, the next Lord Huntingdon, he regarded as his adopted son;[2] wherefore any vagaries into which their family might see fit to persuade his own were at least deserving of polite toleration. He even went with the rest of the world to hear the new preacher, admitted his excellence, and rejected his doctrine. Vainly did

[1] Lady Elizabeth Hastings, eldest daughter of Theophilus, 9th Earl of Huntingdon by his wife Selina, was much admired at Court for her perfect manners, her wit and her remarkable abilities. She was appointed Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princesses Amelia and Caroline in March, 1747, but her mother refused to allow her to play cards on Sunday, and she was forced to resign the post. In 1752 she became the third wife of Baron Rawdon, of Rawdon, County Down, who was created Earl of Moira, January 30th, 1762. On her brother's death without issue in 1789, the ancient baronies of Hastings devolved upon her, and she became Countess of Loudoun in her own right. She is said to have been the patroness of all the literary gemuses of her day.

[2] "He is my particular friend," Chesterfield wrote of him in a letter of introduction; "he looks upon me as his father, and I consider him as my adopted son."

Lady Huntingdon, Lady Gertrude and likewise Melusina, plead with him for the salvation of his soul. He dismissed their importunities with unruffled courtesy. Yet, it may be added, so far did he carry his complaisance that, many years afterwards, when his wife attended Court for the last time on the accession of George III, he actually went to considerable expense and trouble to procure for her from the Continent a gown strictly in harmony with her religious convictions. This was a confection of sober brown relieved only by silver flowers embossed upon the brocade. It at once attracted the attention of the brusque young King, who gathered that it was designed to be indicative of a regenerate heart. "I know who chose that gown for you, Ma'am," he announced to his spurious great-aunt, "—Mr. Whitefield!—I hear that you have attended him diligently." Melusina did not deny the soft impeachment. "Yes, I have attended him," she responded firmly, "and I like him very well." "But after she came to her chair," we are told, "she was grieved she had not said more, when she had so favourable an opportunity."

In another attempted conversion, however, Lady Gertrude and Lady Huntingdon were less successful; this was in the case of the former Mrs. Howard, once the brightest ornament of the Court of George II.

In 1731 Charles Howard, by the deaths of his nephews and two elder brothers, had become ninth Earl of Suffolk, and his wife, unable any longer to hold the subordinate post of Bedchamber-woman, was then made Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline. The death of her husband two years later, and her own re-marriage in 1735 to the Hon. George Berkeley, youngest son of the second Earl of Berkeley, was the nominal cause of her resignation of this post. But it was more than hinted that the true reason of her retirement was pressure rather than inclination, and various were the tales which were current in explanation of the event.

At the date when George II had succeeded to the throne, Mrs. Howard was already in her fortieth year, yet she still contrived "to dress the Queen and amuse the King apparently to the complete satisfaction of both one and the other,"[1]

[1] *Memoirs of Horace Walpole and his Contemporaries*, ed. by Eliot Warburton (1851), Vol. I, page 167.

so that George, as had been his wont, continued to spend many hours of the day in her entertaining society, to the immense satisfaction of his family who were thereby relieved from the boredom of his presence. Nevertheless Lady Suffolk's position was become scarcely a happy one. No longer supreme in her former charm, she had to endure the capricious behaviour of the Queen, the irritable temper of the King, and the petty spite of those who envied her influence with both. To a woman of her amiability and gentleness the situation was peculiarly unpalatable ; by and by it waxed intolerable. As her beauty further waned and the deafness to which she had always been a victim increased, the King was at little pains to conceal his growing indifference, or curb his rudeness. His " conduct to her became worse and worse ; whenever they were together in private, she was the victim of as much ill-humour as he had contrived to preserve undiminished since their last meeting."[1] Certain imprudences, too, were laid to her charge. She had patronised the poet Gay who, in his *Beggar's Opera*, had satirised the Ministers Walpole and Townshend, and she had been the close friend of Pope at a time when he was publishing personal attacks upon the King. Further, she remained on terms of friendship with Chesterfield, Pulteney and other political leaders when they were vehement in their opposition to the Government, and, indeed, a tale runs that it was principally on her account that Chesterfield fell into disgrace at Court.

" Lord Chesterfield," it is related, " committed the folly of paying his court to Lady Suffolk rather than to the Queen, and of those who acted thus, the Queen never failed to oppose the rise. He had long coveted the post of Secretary of State, and an arrangement had been made in his favour, but after an audience with the Queen, to which he had been introduced by Horace Walpole, and thanking her for her concurrence, he made the fatal mistake of paying a long visit to Lady Suffolk. The Queen was informed of the circumstances, and the appointment did not take place.

" At another time he had requested the Queen to speak to the King for some small favour ; the Queen promised, but

[1] *Memoirs of Horace Walpole and his Contemporaries*, ed. by Eliot Warburton (1851), Vol. I, page 170.

forgot it. A few days after, recollecting her promise, she expressed her regret at her forgetfulness but announced that she would mention the request that very day. Chesterfield naïvely replied that she need not trouble, for Lady Suffolk had spoken to the King. The Queen made no reply, but on seeing the King, told him she had long promised to mention a trifling request to his Majesty, but it was needless, *because Lord Chesterfield had just informed her that she had been anticipated by Lady Suffolk.* The King, who always preserved great decorum with regard to appearances and was very unwilling to have it supposed that the favourite interfered, was extremely displeased, both with Lady Suffolk and Lord Chesterfield. The consequence was that in a short time Lady Suffolk went to Bath for her health and returned no more to Court [*sic*] while Chesterfield was dismissed from his office. He never heard the reason till two years before his death, when he was informed by Lord Orford that his disgrace was owing to his having offended the Queen by paying court to Lady Suffolk."[1]

This tale, which is interesting as an indication of the gossip current at the period, has, however, not only been contradicted, but is certainly difficult of credence, for Chesterfield's dismissal from the posts of Lord Steward and Lord of the Bedchamber was the direct result of a contest with Sir Robert Walpole. Nor is it in accordance with the *finesse* of a courtier and a diplomatist, such as he prided himself upon being, that he should be guilty of a speech so gauche to the Queen. Still less, perhaps, is it compatible with the conduct of Queen Caroline to have exhibited pique openly towards an attendant whom, for so many years, she had retained about her person and treated with apparent affection, and whom, it was asserted, she was particularly anxious to placate.[2] Walpole, indeed,

[1] *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, by a member of the Houses of Shirley and Hastings, Vol. I, pages 99–100.

[2] Lady Betty Germain, writing to Dean Swift on February 13th, 1735, says: "The countess has quitted the Court, because, after a long illness at Bath, she did not meet with a reception she liked; though her mistress (Queen Caroline) appeared excessively concerned, and expressed great uneasiness at parting with her; and my opinion is that not only her master and mistress, but her very enemies, will have reason to repent the part they have acted by her." Horace Walpole also represents the Queen as unwilling to part with Lady Suffolk for the reason already mentioned, namely, that however jealous of Lady Suffolk, she latterly dreaded the King's forming a new attachment to a younger rival, and had prevented Lady Suffolk leaving Court as early as she wished to do. (*Suffolk Letters* (1824), Vol. II, page 120.)

professes to give another explanation of this matter. "The reason," he states, "why Lord Chesterfield could not succeed at Court was this. After he returned from his embassy at The Hague, he chanced to engage in play at court one night and won £1500. Not choosing to carry such a sum home at so late an hour, he went to the apartment of the Countess of Suffolk, the royal mistress, and left the money with her. The Queen's apartments had a window which looked into the staircase leading to those of the Countess, and she was informed of the transaction. She ruled all, and positively objected to Chesterfield ever being named." [1]

Of one thing only we may be certain: Chesterfield and Lady Suffolk both fell under the Royal displeasure, and the latter, weary of her equivocal position at Court, "requested from the Queen permission to absent herself under the pretext of trying the effect of the Bath waters upon her health. When she returned after an absence of six weeks, the King no longer visited her and spoke to her with indifference; she therefore asked an audience of the Queen and craved permission to resign her post as Mistress of the Robes."[2] "You will see by the newspapers," wrote the Duke of Newcastle to Sir Robert Walpole, "that Lady Suffolk has left the Court. The particulars I had from the Queen are that last week she acquainted the Queen with her design, putting it upon the King's unkind usage of her. The Queen ordered her to stay a week, which she did; but last Monday had another audience, complained again of unkind treatment from the King, was very civil to the Queen, and went that night to her brother's house in St. James's Square."[3]

Thus ended the career at Court of the fascinating Lady Suffolk. Broken in health and longing for retirement she went to live at her beautiful Villa of Marble Hill, of which we shall hear later. In 1746, however, she was, for the second time, left a widow, and the year following she lost her only son. Small wonder that Lady Huntingdon, Lady Gertrude, and Melusina, concerting together, decided that this moment

[1] *Walpoliana*, Vol. I, pages 83–4.

[2] *Memoirs of Horace Walpole and his Contemporaries*, ed. by Eliot Warburton (1851), Vol. I, pages 167–8.

[3] *Sydney Papers*.

was propitious to achieve the conversion of the bereaved and world-weary beauty. That, under such conditions, she would fall an easy prey to their kindly intentions they do not seem to have doubted ; though to their coadjutor, Lady Rockingham, the attempt is more directly attributed.

" Lady Rockingham," we are told, " prevailed upon Lady Huntingdon to admit the beauty, Lady Suffolk, to hear her chaplain. . . . Mr. Whitefield knew nothing of Lady Suffolk's presence and drew his bow at a venture, but she fancied that every arrow was aimed at her. By dint of extreme self-control she managed to suppress her indignation and to sit out the sermon in silence, but the instant Mr. Whitefield retired she flew into a violent passion, abused Lady Huntingdon roundly and denounced the sermon as a deliberate attack upon herself. In vain her sister-in-law, Lady Betty Germain, tried to appease the beautiful fury and to explain the mistake—in vain old Lady Eleanor Bertie and the Duchess Dowager of Ancaster, both relatives of Lady Suffolk, commanded her silence, she maintained that she had been insulted. She was compelled at last by her relatives who were present to apologise to Lady Huntingdon ; having done this with a bad grace, the mortified beauty left the place to return no more. . . ."[1]

This account obviously ignores three considerations. At the date assigned to this episode, that is after her dual bereavement, Lady Suffolk was a mild-mannered lady in her sixtieth year who could scarcely have played the rôle of a " beautiful fury " ; she was deaf, so that the strictures of Whitefield cannot have been very audible to her ; and it was wholly incompatible with her known character that she should fly into a violent passion or indulge in personal abuse. But that she was excessively annoyed at certain well-meaning efforts on the part of her friends, also that these were doomed to failure, we may safely conclude ; and thus, although Lady Gertrude was sometimes her guest at Twickenham, to the sunny precincts of Campden House Lady Suffolk subsequently came but seldom.

Yet during the summer months there now gathered in Lady Gertrude's pleasant retreat in Kensington a strangely heterogeneous assembly. Eager converts made their way thither, to

[1] *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.*

bask in the sunshine and to listen to the exhortations of their hostess, so gently delivered that the most hardened could not resent them. Weary with well-doing, there came Whitefield, as to an earthly Paradise ; there came Lady Huntingdon full of fresh schemes for the betterment of humanity ; Lady Rockingham earnest in proselytising ; Lord Chesterfield with cynical comments on those fellow-creatures whom he viewed from a different standpoint ; Melusina anxious to imbibe fresh sanctity from the lips of each instructress. There, too, came the famous statesman William Pulteney, in 1742 created Earl of Bath, with his only son Lord Pulteney, the great friend of that older Charles Hotham ; likewise Francis, Lord Huntingdon, who shared the opinions of his devoted mentor Lord Chesterfield rather than the somewhat aggressive piety of his serious-minded mother. There, also, from her house hard by in Pitt Place, Kensington Gravel Pitts, frequently came Mrs. Anne Pitt, eldest of the five sisters of the future Lord Chatham, and who strongly resembled in feature and in talent her illustrious brother. Maid of honour to Queen Caroline, she was later keeper of the privy-purse to the Dowager Princess of Wales ; and the story runs that when on her retirement she received a pension from Lord Bute, her brother sent her a furious letter saying, among other trenchant remarks, that he had " hoped the words Pitt and Pension would never have appeared together." But Anne Pitt bided her time ; and when in 1761 her brother accepted a sop of £30,000 per annum from the same Minister, she quietly sent him a copy of his own letter written to herself on a similar occasion. Meantime, a conspicuous member of society, Mrs. Anne was never a cipher in any assembly which she enlivened with her presence, her wit was inimitable, her bons mots were celebrated, and her strong determination of character was proverbial ; she derided affectation, scorned insincerity, and rapped out oaths with a fluency which must have made Whitefield cringe.

Strangely dissimilar, indeed, were those who sought the refreshment of their souls or bodies in the quiet serenity of that old-world garden ; and curiously at variance the influences thus early brought to bear upon the only son of Lady Gertrude ; but perhaps of all the figures with which his childhood waxed familiar none made a greater impression

upon him than a visitor who came more frequently and was accorded a warmer welcome than all the rest—his dead father's brother, Beaumont Hotham, handsome and urbane, whom he early learnt to know as a kindly uncle, the parent of those five merry cousins with whom so much of his life was passed.

In what manner, however, during those days of his boyhood, little Sir Charles was affected by the religious opinions of his mother and his sisters there is nothing to show. Always a delicate child, as we have seen, his health continued to give Lady Gertrude constant cause for anxiety, and she who had buried two sons before his birth must at times have viewed their frail successor with piteous misgiving. Nevertheless, by and by, he suffered temporary banishment from that haven of his childhood, beautiful Campden House, and was sent first to Marylebone School, then in October, 1743, to Westminster, where his cousin and namesake the older Charles Hotham had preceded him by only two years. There he must have heard the Westminster boys make merry at the expense of that sect to which his nearest relations belonged, he must have heard their gibes as they recalled that episode, never forgotten, of Whitefield's captivity in St. Margaret's Church. But how long he halted between two opinions we can only conjecture, save that it is hinted how certain events which occurred when he was a schoolboy of fourteen were first instrumental in determining the trend of his future outlook.

The year 1750 was ushered in in an unexpected manner. Several severe shocks of earthquake were felt in London, and these, we learn, "were considerably more violent than any remembered for a great number of years; the earth moved westward, then east, then westward again through all London and Westminster. It was a strong jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise like that of thunder. Many houses were much shaken and some chimneys thrown down, but without any further hurt. Multitudes of every class fled from the city with astonishing precipitancy."

Soon it was observed that the tremors had occurred with a certain precision, and four weeks from the shock which had taken place in February it was anticipated that a recurrence of the phenomenon would be felt. "The Ides of March are come!" mockingly wrote Lady Hervey, formerly the beautiful Molly

Lepell,[1] to a friend, " and will I am persuaded be past in all safety before you receive this letter, in spite of prophets or prophecies. . . . I dare say at this minute nine parts in ten of the inhabitants of Westminster are shaking as much from fear as they would from the earthquake if it were really to happen ! " Nevertheless, her confidence proved misplaced. Precisely a month from the date of the previous shock there occurred a second. Beaumont Hotham, writing to his son Charles at this date, relates :—

Thursday 8th March 1750.

Our conversation about Earthquakes had pretty well ceas'd, but for some days to come I suppose we shall again talk of little else, a pretty violent shock being felt this morning about 6 o'clock, it was general in all the parts of London, but happily people were quitt for the fright, little mischief being done. It awak'd me & the rest of my family by the uncommon noise attending it, and the shock tho' short (not half a minute) was so severe, that I thought the House had given way, many people in their fright run into the streets & those who happen'd to be there before, were under the greatest consternation, the Earth seeming to wave before them & the houses on each side to totter.

Various will be the reasonings of the learned upon the subject, but as I much doubt their being conclusive, they will weigh with me accordingly.

The whole town is this day at Brentford for the choice of a Middlesex member, & as usual both sides are very sure, *I* therefore am not.

In this shock some pinnacles of Westminster Abbey were dislodged, but the neighbouring buildings of Westminster School were unharmed. This, however, it was promptly foretold would not long remain the case. Predictions respecting a repetition of the earthquake became innumerable, and greatly alarmed the inhabitants of London. It was asserted that the next shock would completely destroy the metropolis, and a soldier, " a mad trooper of Lord Delewar's," professed to have had an " explicit revelation " that the greater part of London and Westminster would be annihilated soon after midnight

[1] John, Lord Hervey, son of the 1st Earl of Bristol, married, in 1720, Mary, daughter of Brigadier-General Nicholas Lepell.

on April 8th. Small matter that the prophet was immediately afterwards discovered to be insane and sent to Bedlam, the effect of his oracular announcement remained the same. Multitudes anxious to escape the threatened catastrophe fled from London as the dreaded date approached. "Several families are literally gone," wrote the immortal gossip, Horace Walpole, with pardonable surprise, on April 2nd, "and many more are going to-day or to-morrow . . . it is so true that Arthur of White's told me last night that he should put off the last ridotto, which was to be on Thursday, because he hears nobody would come to it"; and the newsmonger adds with characteristic levity—"I have advised several who are going to keep their next earthquake in the country *to take bark for it, it is so periodic!*" Indeed, far-fetched as sounds this advice, an impudent quack actually did a roaring trade among the common people in the sale of certain pills which he assured them were a specific "against an earthquake or any other eruption," while yet another source of profit is recorded by Walpole. "You will not wonder so much at our earthquakes," he wrote again, "as at the effects they have had. All the women in town have taken them up upon the foot of *Judgments*, and the clergy, who have had no windfalls for a long season, have driven horse and foot into this opinion. There has been a shower of sermons and exhortations." Pastoral letters addressed to the faint-hearted sold at a surprising rate; of one effusion ten thousand copies were purchased in two days, and fifty thousand were subscribed for after the two first editions had been exhausted. Meantime the feelings of the alarmed populace were outraged by the giddy behaviour of two young bucks who made a mockery of their fears. Having supped well, and lingered late at Bedford House one night, these revellers wended their way homewards in merry guise, and thundering at the doors of the sleeping inhabitants as they passed, proclaimed in a watchman's stentorian tones—"*Past 4 o'clock, and a dreadful earthquake!*"

None the less, hourly the exodus of the panic-stricken increased, and on April 5th a letter to Captain Hotham from Mr. Wood, a friend of his father's in the Customs House, informs him how—

The Apprehensions of another Earthquake have occasioned the noblest Parts of the other End of the Town to become almost uninhabited. *Nine hundred Coaches passed Hyde Park Corner yesterday on this account.*

An enterprising paper advertised, for the sum of sixpence, " A true and exact List of all the Nobility and Gentry " who had departed or were about to depart from town at this juncture ; nor amongst those who lingered were practical precautions neglected. Ladies had earthquake gowns prepared, garments sufficiently warm to enable them to face the chill night air with impunity, and sufficiently becoming to ensure that they met their possible doom picturesquely. One party of friends, indeed, planned to drive at the last moment to a tavern ten miles out of London, there to play Brag till dawn, and then to return to what had been the metropolis in order to seek amongst the ruins for the corpses of their friends and families who had been foolhardy enough to remain there. And yet one lady, braver than the rest, deliberately quitted the country where she lived, in order to repair to London, for, quoth she, since all her best friends must perish, she preferred not to survive them.

But when the fatal 8th arrived, the courage even of that minority who had scoffed at danger, rapidly dwindled. A newspaper account relates :—

Incredible numbers of people, being under strong apprehensions that London and Westminster would be visited by another and more fatal earthquake on this night, according to the predictions of a crazy life-guardsman, and because it would be just four weeks from the last shock—as that was from the first—left their houses, and walked in the parks and the fields, or lay in boats all night ; many people of fashion in the neighbouring villages sat in their coaches till day-break ; others went off to a greater distance, so that the roads were never more thronged, and lodgings were hardly to be procured even at Windsor ; so far, and even to their wits' end, had their superstitious fears, or their guilty consciences, driven them.

Indeed, on that night foretold for the final catastrophe, people went mad with terror. Those who could not escape from the town fled to open spaces. Tower Hill, Moorfields,

and, above all, Hyde Park, were crowded with men, women and children who remained out of doors throughout the hours of darkness a prey to "direful apprehensions." Others ran about the streets frantic with fear, and proclaiming that the Day of Judgment was about to commence. The chapels of the Methodists were filled with fugitives who came knocking at the doors throughout the night, pleading for admittance, while in the universal panic Whitefield saw his opportunity. At midnight he went into Hyde Park and preached to the trembling multitude collected there. He chose as his subject the Last Judgment; and the surrounding darkness, the tension of the vast crowds, the universal hush of anticipation in which each sound filled the listeners with the alarm of imminent disaster, were valuable adjuncts to the impression which he wished to convey. "The sermon was truly sublime," we are told; "and to the ungodly sinner, the self-righteous Pharisee, and the artful hypocrite, strikingly terrific!" [1]

But in the dawning light of a clear and peaceful day, those who had bivouacked in terror viewed each other somewhat shamefacedly, and slunk away swiftly to their homes. The boats on the Thames which had been hired for the occasion were now abandoned; the coaches began to roll back again past Hyde Park Corner, and thousands of families, greatly surprised at finding themselves alive and hungry, sought refreshment in vain at the taverns which, in view of the expected cessation of their business, had failed to lay in provisions. Meantime those who had not fallen victims to the prevailing panic made wondrous merry at the expense of those who had!

Young Sir Charles Hotham, at his school at Westminster, must have trembled with the rest of the world in the anticipation of an ebullition of Divine wrath, but whether Lady Gertrude removed him from the threatened locality as the dangerous date approached, is not recorded. During the summer which followed he spent a portion of his holidays as usual with his cousins at Bromley, where his uncle, Beaumont Hotham, had a country house, and whence at that date the

[1] *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, Vol. I, page 128. It is, however, there implied that the earthquake in London took place subsequently to the earthquake which destroyed Lisbon in November, 1775, but this is inaccurate, as are many of the dates given in that book.

latter wrote to his eldest son, then abroad, giving a few details of that family gathering:—

Beaumont Hotham to Captain Hotham

Bromley 20 June 1750.

My month of recess still continuing, you see I am taking the benefit of it out of the Dust & air of London, and your Brothers' holydays happening to square with mine, they have been with me some time, & have rather enjoy'd the country more than I have done, as they are more easily pleas'd in the point of horse-flesh than I am, tho', rather than not ride at all, I was 3 or 4 times of their party upon a horse wch Billy[1] recommended to me *as a good one if he was but new rigg'd*, as he call'd it, in other Terms if he had had a new Eye & a new Leg instead of those he was blind & lame of.

Billy returns to Portsmouth on Monday & his Br^os are already at Westminster & all desire to be remembered to you. S^r Charles, who does y^e same, was with us a fortnight, and help'd to increase our daily cavalcade. I am to meet his mother tomorrow at Ld Chest^d's at Blackheath, who, not yet tir'd with Building, is adding a very fine room to his house there.

The town talks confidently, but I hope without foundation that Mons^r Mirepoix[2] comes back upon the King's return for the whole winter & that Lord Alb.[3] of course stays in Paris, the former may like ye disposition, but I question ye latter would.

Lady Huntingdon has sold her house at Chelsea for £1500 to an Irish Lord, whose name I don't now recollect: as the ground Rent etc. announced amounted to about £40 a year & she of late makes no use of it, it is well enough sold.

Towards the close of the summer, however, we find Beaumont—that kindly uncle who always took an affectionate interest in the family of his sister-in-law Lady Gertrude—

[1] William, third son of Beaumont Hotham, 1736–1813, afterwards Admiral of the Blue and first Baron Hotham of Dalton.

[2] Charles Pierre Gaston François de Sévis, Marquis, afterwards Duc de Mirepoix, 1699–1758. He was sent as Ambassador to London, January 1st, 1748. He was twice married, his second wife being the celebrated Maréchale de Mirepoix (Anne Gabrielle de Beauvau-Craon), Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen of France, who lived to 1790. (See page 295.)

[3] William Anne Keppel, 2nd Earl of Albemarle, 1702–54. At the peace of 1748 he was sent as Ambassador-Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary to Paris when the Marquis de Mirepoix was sent to St. James's.

writing in some distress, after a visit to Campden House. "The youngest of 'em there looks wretchedly, & I wish may not be in a worse way than they imagine her." The sisters of Sir Charles had unfortunately shared his tendency to ill-health, and Melusina, known to the family circle as Melly, was already, unrecognised by her relations, in a consumption. But Caroline, the eldest of the three, for a time seemed to overcome the constitutional delicacy from which she had suffered, and at the age of twenty-two showed signs of better health than had yet been her portion. Therefore, all the greater was the distress when, in August, 1750, she was stricken with a violent fever, the nature of which is not explained, but from the first little hope seems to have been entertained of her recovery. Her uncle, chronicler of the family doings, wrote in great grief to his son after a visit to Campden House:—

Bromley Wednesday 5th Sept.

Dear Charles,

I am under much concern for ye condition poor Miss Hotham is in that I can but just acknowledge the receipt of yours of ye 9th Sept N.S.

I left her this morning cover'd with blisters, & the Physicians & family without any hopes, and the fever of about a fortnight's duration has brought Her so very low & weak that it is scarce thought she can hold out till to-morrow. Till last night she had her senses perfectly, & bore her Illness with admirable patience & resolution. The mother & family you may believe are quite overwhelm'd with Sorrow, so that my wife will endeavour to administer some comfort by going (if possible) to Kensington for a few days, as they seem very desirous of her company, tho' I am much afraid the melancholy scene & her tenderness may affect her weak Nerves & do her Harm.

Miss Melly also continues much out of order, which further contributes to the distress of the family. God send them comfort & you his blessings, which concludes this from

Your affectionate father,

Beaumont Hotham.

Still through those bright September days during which, in sad contrast, the shadow of death brooded darkly over Campden House, all within was nevertheless calmness and resignation. In the sick room where Caroline Hotham lay battling

for her young life her friends gathered for consolation and for prayer. There her two sisters, aged respectively nineteen and sixteen, were assiduous in their attendance ; there, too, summoned from his school at Westminster, fourteen-year-old Sir Charles for the first time was brought face to face with the stern realities of existence. There came Lady Selina Hastings, a year his junior, herself fated to die in the fullness of youth and happiness, on the eve of her marriage in 1763 to a cousin to whom she became fondly attached. And there likewise, the gossips whispered, came young Lord Huntingdon, appalled at the catastrophe which threatened. In the previous March he had attained his majority and had taken possession of Donington Hall as his place of residence. Handsome, clever, worldly, he was still an apt pupil of his adopted father, the cynic Chesterfield, and had little sympathy with the religious views of his sisters or their dearest friends, the three daughters of Lady Gertrude. Yet so close had been the intimacy between the two families that he and the girl who now lay dying had been like brother and sister ; and so powerfully had her charm wrought upon him that even her saintliness had ceased to create a barrier between them. There had not been wanting many who predicted that a dearer tie would one day unite the former playmates, and Lady Huntingdon, it is said, had vainly hoped that in the case of her erring son this human love might lead to the divine. But now to the approaching fate of the stricken girl only an added pathos was lent by this incipient romance.

Nevertheless she herself faced the inevitable with a courage which never wavered. She had, we are told, " all her mother's piety. When Lady Gertrude had opened her house to the preaching of the gospel, and when the house of Lady Huntingdon was a temple at which the great were not ashamed to worship Christ, this young lady had been heartily awakened by the preaching of Mr. Whitefield. Before the period of which we write, she had long seemed to be preparing for that inheritance which was reserved for her in the Courts above, but her friends had little expectation of the calm splendour of that closing scene which endeared her example to the Church."[1]

[1] *The Life and Times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, Vol. I, page 456. The date of the death of Caroline Hotham is, however, wrongly given in that volume.

Whitefield, at the special request of Lady Gertrude, visited the invalid, and a solemn prayer-meeting was held on her behalf in the drawing-room at Campden House which was attended by all members of the two families and their servants, who were deeply affected. Not long after this sad gathering Caroline Hotham embraced her family and friends, and with almost her last breath assuring her mother that she was free from pain or fear, took leave without regret of a world in which she had spent so brief a period. She was buried in the graveyard of the parish church at Kensington; and a graphic description of the closing scenes of her existence was subsequently sent by Whitefield to Lady Elizabeth Hastings, the eldest daughter of Lady Huntingdon, then about nineteen years of age:—

George Whitefield to Lady Elizabeth Hastings

Gloucester September 22d 1750.

As I know your Ladyship had a great value for the late Honble [*sic*] Miss Hotham, I cannot but think a short account of her behaviour under her last sickness must not only alleviate the concern your Ladyship must necessarily feel for so intimate an acquaintance, but also excite you to pray that your latter end may be like hers. These are the motives that induce me to trouble your Ladyship with these few hints concerning your deceased friend.

I think it is now nearly three weeks since good Lady Gertrude desired me to visit her sick daughter. She had been prayed for very earnestly the day after the Sacrament in Audley St and likewise previous to my visit in Lady Hotham's room; when I came to her bedside she seemed glad to see me, but desired I would speak and pray as softly as I could. I conversed with her a little and she dropped some strong things about the vanity of this world and the littleness of everything out of Jesus Christ. I prayed as low as I could, but in prayer (your ladyship has been too well acquainted with these things to call it enthusiasm) I felt a very uncommon energy and power to wrestle with God on her behalf. She soon felt it too, and several times broke into such exclamations as these—"What a wretch I am; What a wretch I am!" She seemed to speak out of the abundant enthusiasm of her heart from a feeling sense of her own vileness—her honoured parent and attendant Servants were much affected.

After prayer she seemed as though she had felt things unutterable, bemoaned her ingratitude to God and Christ, and I believe would gladly have given a detail of all her faults she could reckon up. Her having had a form of godliness but never having felt its power was what she most bewailed.

I left her; she continued in the same frame, and when Mrs Scott asked her whether she felt her heart to be as bad as she expressed herself, she answered "Yes, and worse."

At her request and after a proper intermission I gave her the Holy Communion; a communion indeed it was, never did I see a person receive it with seemingly greater contrition, more earnest desire for pardon and reconciliation with God and Christ, or stronger purposes of devoting her future life to his service. Being weak, she was desired to keep lying in her bed. She replied—"*I can rise to take physic; shall I not do so to pray?*"

When I was repeating the Communion Office she applied all to herself, and broke out frequently aloud in her supplications. When I said "the burden of them is intolerable," she burst out "*Yea, very intolerable!*" with abundance of suchlike expressions. When she took the Bread and Wine, her concern gave her language, and she spake like one that was ripening for heaven. Those around her wept for joy—my cold heart was also touched. I left her with the full persuasion that either she was to be taken soon, or to be left a blessing here below. I think she lived a week after—continued in the same frame as far as I hear, and I trust she is now gone where she will sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb for ever. The thought of this comforts the good Lady Gertrude, and the same consideration will, I trust, have the same effects upon your Ladyship. Only methinks I hear you say—"No, I will not stop there; by Divine Grace I will devote myself to Jesus Christ now and give Him no rest till I see the world in that light dear Miss Hotham did, and as I myself shall when I come to die, and will follow my honoured mother as she follows Jesus Christ, and count the Redeemer's reproach of more value than all the honours, and riches and pleasures of the world. I will fly to Christ by faith and through the help of my God keep up—not only the form—but also the power of godliness in heart and life."

That the glorious Emmanuel may enable your Ladyship to put all this into practice is the earnest prayer of your most ready servant for Christ's sake,

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

This letter which, long afterwards, was given by Lady Charlotte Fitzgerald,[1] the daughter of its recipient, to Sir William Hotham a relation of the dead girl, was endorsed by him with the sensible comment :—

The young lady above alluded to bore a most excellent character, and had been during her short and complaining life under the constant eye of her mother. She had, therefore, neither time nor opportunity for the sins or vilenesses which this enthusiast reports her groaning under !

Whitefield, however, on returning to town preached a funeral sermon at the Tabernacle on the death of Miss Hotham " to an overflowing and deeply affected congregation ; and having heard from Lady Huntingdon of the Christian fortitude with which Lady Gertrude supported her deprivation, he wrote a kind and consoling letter to the bereaved mother, who was greatly comforted." The unshaken calmness with which Lady Gertrude bore her loss is also remarked in a letter from Beaumont Hotham to his eldest son :—

Bromley Wednesday Sept 19th.

Your compliments at Kensington on the late melancholy occasion I made last Sunday, as I pass'd the day there & brought your mother back, who is very well & salutes you. My Lady's behaviour is such, so amazingly easy and compos'd, that I can ascribe so resigned a Demeanour to nothing but her just Sense of Religion. The rest of the family bear the misfortune well & properly, but the calmness & tranquility Miss Hotham bore her Illness wth, to the last, were quite wonderfull. It was a fever she died of.

Her sister Melly is a good deal better since giving Her some Worm Medicines, which the Doctors think best suit her Case, I don't think Her, however, clear of Danger.

But the physic which the apothecaries thus sapiently administered to Miss Hotham as a cure for consumption, needless to add, did not prove efficacious ; and Lady Gertrude subsequently took her invalid daughter to various waters in an endeavour to cure her complaint. Meanwhile the health of Sir Charles was giving fresh cause for anxiety, and at last, in the

[1] Charlotte Adelaide Constantia, youngest daughter of the Earl of Moira and Lady Loudoun, *née* Lady Elizabeth Hastings, m. in 1814 Hamilton Fitzgerald, Esq.

hope that constant change of scene and climate would establish his strength, it was decided that he should be removed from Westminster and sent abroad with a travelling tutor. Accordingly, in the spring of 1751, at the age of fifteen, he set off on a prolonged tour upon the Continent with a M. Tollot, a Swiss physician. He went first to Paris, where his cousin and namesake, Captain Hotham, had till recently been in attendance upon Lord Albemarle, the British Ambassador-Extraordinary, and where Lord Huntingdon had arrived well supplied with introductions from Lord Chesterfield, having left England to do the grand tour shortly after the death of Caroline Hotham. Sir Charles, however, both by reason of his age and health, was not permitted to remain long in the gay capital; and respecting his subsequent wanderings a few details have survived in letters which he and other members of his family penned at that date to Captain Hotham who had returned to England—letters which, in their punctilious politeness, serve to mark the gulf between the past and the present. For while Beaumont Hotham in his correspondence never ventured to refer to his nieces by their Christian names, so the young cousins, brought up almost as one family, never failed to address each other with due formality and to apologise in a fashion too lengthy to quote for the extreme temerity exhibited by each writer in venturing to address each recipient. Lady Gertrude alone was sufficiently unconventional occasionally to address her nephew as "My young Friend."

Lady Gertrude Hotham to Captain Hotham

Cheltenham May 1751.

My young Friend,

I received three letters from Charles dated from Paris, and one from Bordeau in his way to Toulouse where I long to hear of his safe arrival, the weather being now so hot as to make travelling very disagreeable. . . . We came through such roads here as I believe are not to be matched in any part of England, as you may easily conceive when a Coach but the week before I came was obliged to be pulled out of the stiff clay by Oxen. But I don't repine in the least for the fatigue of our journey, had it been much greater I am amply repaid for it by the waters agreeing so well with Melly, that I don't doubt but by God's blessing they will very soon establish her health, she having

Already received more benefit from them than she did in the whole five weeks from Bristol. . . .

The Same to the Same

Cheltenham June 13th 1751.

My dear Friend,

. . . The payments that my Brother Hotham [1] has been so good to take the trouble of for me. . . . I should have wrote to have thank'd him, but that I was allways taught in my Nursery that ye youngest was to be serv'd first, and it seem'd awkward to me to Write to both Father and Son by ye same post from the same Place, and most probably the Same Words upon the Same Subject, as you may observe I have made use of one Word four times in three lines, which proves my head not to be productive of more variety than the Place, which affords little more than Water ; what Company there is consists chiefly of Irish, Who are wonderfully jolly over their Tip(p)le at the Well in a Morning & still more so, I am inclin'd to think, in the evening ; but those Partys we don't interrupt, all ours are Morning ones which suffices us for the rest of the day—we having so agreeable Company in the house are not reduced to seek it elsewhere. Namely Mrs Carteret, Mrs Cavendish[2] and the two Miss Clutterbucks[3] which will tempt me to stay something longer than I first design'd, tho' not for the sake of Drinking, which Company is very apt to lead one into, was I not restrain'd from commiting any escapes [*sic*] of that kind by my Brother Chesterfield's timely admonitions not to indulge in too great quantitys of these Waters nor continue them too long.

Lady Huntingdon and her family return'd to Bristol yesterday morning, after having been so very kind as to come on purpose to pass a week with us here. . . .

They have made a match here between Lord Bristol [4] and Lady Charlotte Tufton, perhaps without the least foundation.

[1] Beaumont Hotham, afterwards 7th Baronet, father of Captain Charles Hotham.

[2] Mrs. Carteret and Mrs. Cavendish, two sisters who were ardent disciples of Lady Huntingdon and Lady Gertrude Hotham. "Being women of rank and fortune," we are told, "their influence was considerable." They died within a short time of each other, and an account of their edifying deaths appeared in the *Christian Guardian*.

[3] Probably relations of Thomas Clutterbuck, Esq., of Mill Green. (See page 273.)

[4] George William, 2nd Earl of Bristol, who succeeded his grandfather January 20th, 1751. He died unmarried in 1785.

I suppose your only amusements now are Vox Hall and Renelagh which I think deserve ye prefference this fine Weather.

Gatty[1] has just now receiv'd the favour of a letter from her Uncle Hotham & is now employ'd in answering of it in my Name and her own with our most grateful thanks for the kind part he has acted, in complyance to our desire, for poor Phill Gibson, and you may have no small satisfaction in finding his endeavours have been so successfull, I haveing had a letter from my Brother Chesterfield this morning wherein he informs me of his being pardon'd upon condition of transportation for life, which indeed is all one could wish or desire under his unhappy circumstances, 'tis better he should suffer for his crimes in order through the grace of God to be brought into a State of repentance and humiliation and faith in the Merits of Jesus Christ his redeemer, to receive pardon and Mercy at the hands of God as did the thief upon the cross.

I am glad to hear Lord Albemarle is coming over to receive the gold key, as I am certain Yr grateful Sentiments have a share in his happiness, but must confess my disappointment to have been as great, if not greater than yours could be by your not being made choice of for one of his Royal Highnesses family, my Comfort is that whatever the Obstacle was it could not be disapprobation, and therefore that there is yet Something better in Store, which that there may be is the most sincere wish

of yours very affectionately

G. H.

My girls charge me with their kind compliments.

Miss Gertrude Hotham to Captain Hotham

Padworth Oct. 20th 1751.

Dear Sir,

It will I am sure be no small pleasure to Mamma to be inform'd of my Brother's being able in so short a time to keep up a French correspondence which, when encouraged by so great a Proficient in the Language as you are, can't fail, I am sure, of being of the greatest use and Improvement to him. He has been in the country for some time past for a little Change of Place by which means Toulouse will, I hope, appear the more gay and Lively at his return there again which he

[1] Gertrude Hotham, her youngest daughter, who afterwards married Welbore Ellis Agar, Esq. (See page 309.)

writes word will be in November, that being about the Time it begins to fill.

I imagine M. Mirepoix's ball will soon draw everybody to London, I conclude you are to be there, and hope you will meet with everything to render it agreeable and entertaining. . . .

I think Mamma seems quite uncertain as to what part of the world she shall fix in, she has not determin'd upon settling at Bath, but hitherto by having had Lady Huntingdon so near her and now having had the pleasure of my Uncle Chesterfield's Company there for some time, she has very good means for its being made quite agreeable to her, she and Melly were both pretty well when I last heard, and will I am sure rejoice in being informed when I write next of the wellfare of all at Bromley.

Bath at this date was very full of the friends of Lady Gertrude Hotham. Lady Vere, writing thence on October 19th to Lady Suffolk, formerly Mrs. Howard, relates that " Lady Albemarle arrived last night, ate a bit, dressed herself and went to the rooms ; such multitudes as were there . . . Lord Chesterfield and his son, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, Lord Charles (Douglas) the Duke's second son, who has been very ill here but is now better, Sir John Cope (the unfortunate hero of Preston Pans), Tom Hervey (brother of John, Lord Hervey) and family, Lady Mary Powis and Lady Fanny Tilson, the Speaker (Arthur Onslow) and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Lambe,[1] Sir John Ligonier and Mr. Pitt I really think are all we know amongst the millions. Lady Betty (Germain)," etc.[2] All were old acquaintances of Lady Gertrude, and doubtless in their congenial society she strove to turn her thoughts from her recent bereavement, and from her constant anxiety respecting her son.

Meanwhile the young traveller was keeping up a steady correspondence, written in a curious mixture of French and English, with his cousin and namesake Charles Hotham, to whom he seems to have been greatly attached; indeed all his letters reveal a singularly pleasing and affectionate disposition. " Was Toulouse the most agreeable place in the World

[1] Probably Matthew Lamb, Esq., of Brookett Hall, created a Baronet in 1755, father of the 1st Viscount Melbourne.

[2] *Suffolk Letters*, Vol. II, pages 220–1.

(which I cannot say it is)," he exclaims, " I should, I hope, find time to remember all my friends. Be assured 'tis my greatest joy, and was I to be hindred from that Satisfaction all places would be equally disagreeable to me." Next, launching into French, he relates how everybody has left the town, and how there is nothing to do but walk about when the heat has subsided, or go to a concert once a week. Thus his thoughts turn longingly to the life and the friends he has left—to news of a rebellion at Westminster School ; to the manner in which this will " hurt good Dr. Nichols [1] who I have so great a regard for as to be sincerely concerned at anything which is likely to displease him " ; to the recent illness of Lord Pulteney and the approaching coming-of-age of that former playfellow. But a few months later he wrote more cheerfully :—

Sir Charles Hotham to Captain Hotham

Montpellier Jan ye 18th N.S. (1752)

I rely upon your goodness for pardon, my dear Captain, but am nevertheless quite ashamed to have so long delayed answering your last most obliging Letter. I shall not endeavour to excuse myself, I am too conscious of my Guilt ; but with so good a Friend as is my Dear Cousin what indulgences may one not hope for ?

By the date of my letter you will find we have changed our quarters, whether it be for the better or worse I can't yet say, not having been here long enough to determine with regard to the Climate I can already give the preference to that of Toulouse ; as to the people or Diversions, *il me faut encore du tems pour en juger. Vous amuseais* [*sic*] *vous bien à Londrès ?*—are there many amusements going forward ? My sister wrote me word some time ago of a ball that Monsieur de Mirepoix was to give, which she said was to be a most magnificent affair. That it was to last three days, and that the King and all the Royal Family were to be there. Has it yet been given, or is it to come ? Supposing it to be over I will ask you how you liked it, and if it answered your expectation.

[1] Dr. John Nicoll, who succeeded John Freind as second master of Westminster School in 1733, at the age of fifty. His name, we are told, " was mangled not only by posterity but by his own pupils and contemporaries. Pulteney and Chesterfield, Cowper and Warren Hastings, Warburton and Cumberland call him Nichols or Nicholls." (*Annals of Westminster School*, by John Sargeaunt (1898), page 166. Nicoll was master till 1753.)

We have balls here once a week, and I will answer for it more diverting ones than any you can have in England. The Mademoiselle who gives them is forescore and some odd years old. She not only dances Minuets and Country Dances but also *La Folie d'Espagne*. She is of great quality and very rich ; but a Protestant, as are above halve [*sic*] the inhabitants of this Town ; and most of them very unhappy, the Bishop being very severe with them. He has defended their marrying. This dancing Mademoiselle, upon finding she could not do what she pleased with her mony [*sic*] after her death, said she would enjoy it while living, and accordingly takes this Method of spending it. Upon hearing that my Lord Cornbury,[1] who passed thro' this town some time ago, was to come to her Ball, she sent to Lions for the richest gold Stuff that could be got to wear upon the occasion, and I believe bought Jewels to a considerable value.

I have just this instant receivd your last of Dec. ye 20th O.S. A thousand thanks to you, my dear Cousin for it. Be assured that in letting me hear from you, you afford me the greatest delight I am capable of enjoying. And if I am dilatory in my answers believe me it is the fear of being troublesome not the want of inclination that renders me so. For I am never so happy as when I have an opportunity of enquiring after all my Friends in Duke Street who I, with the greatest reason, love and regard to the utmost of my Power.

Pray remember me in the kindest manner to my Uncle, Aunt, and to all my Cousins. I congratulate Beaumont[2] with all my heart upon his removal into the fifth form and don't doubt but he will be an honour to it, as I know among many other advantages attending that Class one has the more Particular one of conversing frequently with Doctor Nichols [*sic*] ; will you desire Beaumont to take an opportunity of remembering me to him, and to assure him that I shall be ever mindful of his care and attention to me when under his tuition.

[1] Henry, Viscount Cornbury, born 1710, third but first surviving son and heir of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. He was brother to the Duchess of Queensberry, and a great-grandson of the famous Lord Chancellor Clarendon. He was Gentleman of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales in 1738. On January 28th, 1750, he was summoned to the House of Lords in his father's barony as Lord Hyde of Hindon. He married, November, 1737, Frances, daughter of the 2nd Earl of Lichfield, but was a widower at the date of this letter. He died s.p. six months before his father at Paris from a fall from his horse, and was buried 12th June, 1753, in Westminster Abbey. (See also Vol. II., page 27.)

[2] His cousin, the fourth son of his uncle, Beaumont Hotham, afterwards Baron of the Exchequer, 12th Baronet, and second Baron Hotham.

SIR CHARLES HOTHAM, THE 6TH BARONET
GROOM OF THE BEDCHAMBER TO GEORGES II AND III

I reckon my cousin John[1] will soon be leaving Westminster to go to either Oxford or Cambridge. . . .

I am much concerned to find by your last that this famous Ball of Monsieur de Mirepoix, after all, is not to take place ; no small disappointment to those who were invited to it. I can't help being somewhat curious myself to know the cause of so sudden a change.

Adieu my dear Cousin. Pray forewarn my uncle that he will soon be troubled with a letter from me, I know him to be so good that I daresay he will allow me the satisfaction of inquiring after him now and then. I am with the greatest truth

Your ever affectionate Friend
& humble Servant CHAS. HOTHAM.

The reason why Lord Cornbury, who passed through Montpellier and attended the ball given by this enterprising "dancing Mademoiselle," was wandering thus disconsolately about the Continent, we shall learn at a later date. The letters, however, from the involuntary exile Sir Charles, some written from Naples in September of that same year, have in them the ring of a great loneliness. "The pleasure of hearing from you," he wrote pathetically to his cousin, "is really to me so very great a one, that I would sooner give up anything than your correspondence. . . . You say that when you know me settled in a place you often attend me *en idée*, even that is a comfort to me who desire nothing so much as not to be indifferent to you." Meantime his impression of Naples is not wholly flattering :—

The situation of this is indeed inconceivably fine & the town itself so very large and well peopled that it puts one much in mind of London. We are here in a bad time of year in regard to diversions. There are indeed none at all going forward at present. I was yesterday at Court, which has not the appearance of a very brilliant one. . . . Such a parcel of ugly women as is in this town I never saw in any one place in my life. . . .

He had, he explains, risked the "Mal Aria" of Rome in order to see his uncle, Sir William Stanhope,[2] who was *en route*

[1] Second son of Beaumont Hotham, afterwards 12th Baronet.

[2] Sir William Stanhope, K.B., was the only surviving brother of Philip Dormer, 4th Earl of Chesterfield. He was very deaf, yet married three times, and at this date was a widower, his second wife, the daughter of Sir Ambrose Crawley, Knight, having died in 1746. (See also page 303.)

for Sicily, but had only lain at the Eternal City for one night, as he intended to visit it later in the company of his uncle when the latter returned from his present expedition. No account has survived of his second and prolonged sojourn in Rome, but on May 7th, 1754, Sir Charles wrote from Vienna :—

Nous voici à Vienne, mon cher Cousin, apres un voyage des plus agréeables. Fine weather, fine roads and a fine country can't but make travelling extreamly agreeable. . . .

What I have seen of this place I like extreamly, the people appear very amiable and are glad to have strangers in their town. 'Tis true their Sovereigns set them a good example of affability for I never met with more in any two people than the Emperor and Empress.[1] To judge by the drawing-room I was at the other night, I fancy there must be a good deal of magnificence here upon particular occasions. I never saw finer cloaths or finer Jewels, or, what is better than both, finer Women than these. Yet I can't help regretting Rome and indeed Italy in general, 'tis no doubt a charming country, take it all in all, to those who chose to make it so, capable of proving no less profitable than pleasurable. Our Carnival at Rome this year was most Joyous, 'tis more so there than in any other town in Italy in proportion as it's shorter, and the Romans during it are really mad.

I can't help thinking it's a Pity Rome shou'd not be where Paris is, that it might be kept for the *Bonne Bouche* in the other's stead ! I must own I think it deserves that preference, at least 'twould be better for us poor Englishmen was it for no other reason than that we should avoid the dash *de Petit Maître* we seldom miss carrying home with us from thence.

Pardon me, dear Captain, for talking thus freely of a place, I know you to have a liking for, but as very few are they who, like your self, have reaped all the good of it without being ever so slightly tainted with its extravagancies, you must own *que pour le général, le séjour de Paris est à craindre. Pour moi c'est bien à souhaiter car j'ai presque entièrement oublié la Peu de Français que Je sçavai, n'ayant point eu occasion de le retenir en Italie où l'on trouve fort peu de gens qui le sçavent parler.* . . .

For five years young Charles Hotham continued to travel about the Continent, occasionally accompanied by Philip

[1] Francis I of Austria and his wife Maria Theresa.

Stanhope,[1] who was also touring abroad at this date. He went to the most beautiful parts of France and Switzerland; he journeyed throughout the length and breadth of Italy; as he grew older he visited the Courts of Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Prussia and most of the Principalities of Germany. Such an extensive knowledge of other countries was in itself a liberal education; and since he had inherited his father's unusual talent as a linguist, which this long sojourn abroad served to develop, he was in a position to profit to the full by the opportunities for self-improvement thus afforded. When, therefore, he finally returned to England in the spring of 1757 at the age of twenty-one, we are told he had become "an amiable and delightful man, possessing suavety of manners and elegance of mind; and besides his extraordinary facility for acquiring modern languages, he had a habit of elegant politeness which seemed natural to him." [2]

Lady Gertrude's joy at the return of her son was great, and it now seemed as though a long and brilliant career lay before him. Immediately upon his arrival in England he was given the post which his father had so long occupied, that of Groom of the Bedchamber to the King; and shortly afterwards an attachment approved by all his family promised for him a future of great happiness. In December of that same year, 1757, he married Miss Clara Anne Clutterbuck,[3] a young lady pleasing in appearance and the heiress to a considerable fortune. Nevertheless, tragedy seemed to have marked the bridegroom for its own. His health grew worse, and the manuscript History relates—"Soon after his return from abroad, notwithstanding all he had learnt, all he had seen . . . he grew reserved and retired; gave up all communication with the friends and companions of his youth, and seldom saw anyone out of his own house, except his uncle for whom he uniformly and justly retained the greatest veneration and regard, and his cousins whom he loved." But even these he appears at last to have avoided, while a spirit of fanaticism gained hold upon him. On December 1st, 1758, young

[1] Philip Stanhope, natural son of Lord Chesterfield, born 1733. His mother was Madame de Bouchet. (See Vol. II., page 316.)

[2] MS. History.

[3] Daughter and heiress of Thomas Clutterbuck, Esq., of Mill Green, Essex, by his wife Henrietta, daughter of Lionel, 1st Earl of Dysart.

Beaumont Hotham wrote to his brother with a fine contempt :—

Sir Charles has been singing spiritual songs at Dalton all the Summer, where I believe no body goes near him, for the mask of ill-health which he constantly wears to impose upon people his inefficiency for society is too thin to hide his aversion to it. The Commodore[1] surprised him one morning at breakfast when the Melampe was at Hull. He has sold his house at Beverley, but to whom or for what is not as yet communicated to us. Lady Gertrude has sold hers at Bath to Sir John Cope and has bought one near Cavendish Square. You very likely know all this before, but as it came into train, I writ it down.

The above, however, is not entirely correct. Sir Charles, disliking the house which his grandfather had built in the heart of Beverley, sold all the furniture it had contained, but the empty shell he gave to his uncle Beaumont Hotham. The latter, not knowing what to do with it, parted with it to a purchaser who pulled it down for the value of the materials, and thus was ruthlessly destroyed a handsome, substantial dwelling of considerable value. Sir Charles also did away with the park of red deer at Scorborough, which had never been a good one owing to the richness of the soil, and at this date he already seems to have had in contemplation the erection of a larger house at Dalton, for he began to plant and plan an estate there, little dreaming that these and all other schemes with which he designed to fill his self-imposed solitude were doomed never to see fruition.

Young Lady Hotham, whose life under the circumstances one fancies cannot have been a very cheerful one, appears likewise to have shared her husband's disability of ill-health. In 1758 she was staying with her mother-in-law, Lady Gertrude, at Kensington, and on June 22nd of that year Mrs. Anne Pitt wrote to Lady Suffolk :—

I do not know what to think of my Lady Hotham ; for though she has had no fever for several days, and has hardly any cough or spitting, she has an entire loss of appetite, and grows weaker and looks worse. Her surgeon told me yesterday he should be very uneasy if she did not grow better, and I will tell you before I seal my letter how she is to-day. . . .

[1] William Hotham, afterwards Admiral of the Blue and first Lord Hotham.

LADY HOTHAM,
WIFE OF THE 6TH BARONET. OB. ÆTAT 24

They have just sent me word my Lady Hotham has had a pretty good night, and is pretty well this morning ; but I shall know more of her in the afternoon.

I wish you would be *my Lady Huntingdon's rival ;* as Lady Gertrude Hotham told me (with carnal satisfaction) *you had talked a little scandal to her !*

I have seen Mrs Carteret who desires her Com^ts^ to you. Lady Hotham is weaker to-day, which I think very bad, though there is no change for the worse in other respects.

It would appear as though the six months' bride had already shown signs of the same complaint which was blighting the young life of her sister-in-law, Melusina Hotham. Yet for a time she kept her fate at bay. On May 16th, 1759, we find George, the youngest son of Beaumont Hotham, writing to his eldest brother :—

I have the Pleasure to acquaint you that our Branch of the Hothams are well, how the other Part are I am really totally ignorant, but I suppose them, according to Custom, to be all ill. I have not learnt whether Sir Chas. has quitted his Bed yet ; Lady Hotham is in a very indifferent Way & has lodgings somewhere near Paddington for the air.

But even the fine air of Paddington failed in effect, and, when summer was in the height of its golden glory that year, more alarming news respecting the young wife of Sir Charles checked the thoughtless gibes of his merry cousins. Lady Hotham, in addition to her former ill-health, had unfortunately caught the measles which, combined with a violent fever, terminated her fragile existence in a few days. Little over eighteen months after her wedding she expired on June 30th, 1759, at the early age of twenty-four ; and in the untimely grave wherein she was laid there seems likewise to have been buried the youth of Charles Hotham, and his last strong hold upon life.

Yet, for a time, he appears to have struggled against the shock of that bereavement from which it was difficult to rally. With all existence before him, with wealth and every worldly advantage at his command, life had yet been robbed of its sweetness, and in the wreckage of his earthly happiness he sought peace where his mother and sisters had found it.

The satisfaction of Lady Gertrude was great at seeing her son become a sincere convert to the religion she had so much at heart, all the more that she had feared the close friendship which still existed between him and Lord Huntingdon would operate in a contrary manner. Despite his increasing love of solitude, Sir Charles during his attendance at Court perforce encountered many of his former acquaintances, and, among others, Lord Huntingdon refused to allow his early intimacy with the young recluse to lapse. Like Sir Charles, he had returned from abroad a remarkable linguist. He was handsome, fashionable and a general favourite. His long sojourn on the Continent had made his manners "more like those of a foreigner than an Englishman; he spoke French, Italian and Spanish perfectly, with all the elegance of a foreign Courtier"; still more, we are told "it was impossible to be in his society without obtaining information, since he was equally polite to the wise and the ignorant." A polished gentleman, in short, and an agreeable companion, in spite of his seniority to young Hotham, Lord Huntingdon clung with a marked affection to the brother of that dead girl whom it was popularly supposed he had once loved, so that both Lady Huntingdon and Lady Gertrude began to hope that the piety of the younger man might exercise an influence on the elder. For a time it seemed as though their wishes were about to be realised; and even Whitefield wrote triumphantly to Lady Fanny Shirley :—

It will be pleasant to see Sir Charles and the Earl striving who shall go fastest to Heaven. Your Ladyship will scorn to be outstripped by any. The Almighty God approves the ambition, and Angels look down with pleasure to see the event.

But Lord Huntingdon was still dominated by Lord Chesterfield, and moreover, before long, the influence of his younger friend was removed. Sir Charles did not remain at Court where, however, it is said, "he dared to be good," but the condition of his health must have rendered his duties there impracticable. On November 16th, 1759, his cousin Beaumont writes :—

Sir Charles, our friend, fancys & calls himself very unwell, but his mother told me the other day that he had in a manner

lost the use of his left side, and his eldest Sister said yesterday that his left hand is lately very considerably withered.

Soon after the death of George II and the accession of the young King George III, Sir Charles resigned his post in the service of the new Sovereign, pleading as an excuse his failing health ; and on the same plea he declined to stand for Beverley, the seat so long filled by his father and grandfather, which he could have secured without trouble or expense. Thus, within a few months from the death of his wife, he had retired from the world, and wholly abandoned himself to melancholy and seclusion.

It soon, however, became necessary for him to go abroad again in search of the strength of which the English climate quickly deprived him ; and thither, during the years which followed, he was constantly forced to return. One curious phase of his illness furnished renewed cause for merriment among his relations, for, not content with prescribing worm powders for tuberculosis in the case of his sister Melusina, the apothecaries of his day appear to have encouraged in Sir Charles the idea that his own ill-health was occasioned by the presence of something akin to that "Solitary Worm" referred to in the "Reaceat Booke" of his female ancestors. To this conviction we subsequently find Beaumont Hotham making facetious allusion, in a letter dated July 13th, 1762 :—

Sir C. tells me he designs for *Suisse*. Ld Chesterfield adds—"In quest, to be sure, of a *Worm Man-Midwife*," there being a famous Worm Doctor there !

On October 21st of the same year John Hotham writes :—

Sir Chas. is gone to Switzerland in quest of the Eternal Worm, accompanied by Tollot and—Miss Melly and her Maid ! ! But hush ! for your life, to every mortal breathing ! This surprising story you shall hear at leisure when you come to England. I shall probably be murdered for saying as much.

But the Swiss physicians proved of no greater efficacy than their English colleagues, and in 1764 poor Miss Melly at last succumbed to the illness which for so long had been her portion. Nevertheless Sir Charles must still have hoped for

his own recovery and believed that eventually he would be able to remain in Yorkshire, for he had not abandoned his dream of building for himself a suitable house at Dalton, so that in 1767 he had actually begun to burn the bricks and lay down the timbers when his scheme was finally frustrated.

Again he found that his health necessitated his going abroad, and he accordingly set out for Nice ; but during his journey thither he one day mounted his horse, as was occasionally his habit in order to get exercise. The animal became restive, and Sir Charles, partially paralysed, and with one arm useless, was unable to control it. He was thrown, and the locality being boggy, he sustained a severe wetting. Although his coach and servants were in attendance and he was driven with the utmost speed to an inn at Stavola, a remote village about nine miles from the German Spa where he had been staying, the chill which he contracted as a result of this fall in his weak state of health proved fatal. He expired on October 13th, 1767, at the early age of thirty-two, and, amiable, affectionate and unfortunate, we are told he was " beloved and regretted by all who had had the happiness of his acquaintance." [1] His body, brought back to Dalton, was subsequently laid by the side of the young wife who had predeceased him, and near the home where he had once hoped to pass his days.

At his death the title reverted to his uncle Beaumont Hotham, of whom mention has constantly been made in these pages, and who was then in his seventieth year ; but the estates were not entailed, and the family now found themselves confronted by the same anxiety which had arisen in 1689 on the death of " the Revolution Sir John." The late owner had been entirely at liberty to dispose of his property as he preferred, and in view of his great affection for his mother and his sister, it was considered only too probable that he had " *gratified his natural affection for his immediate relatives to the future ruin of the family.*" [2] Moreover this suspense was unduly prolonged owing to the fact that among the papers which Sir Charles had taken abroad no will could be found. His executors and his relations searched for it in vain ; " his escritoire, bureau, and iron boxes at Dalton and at his house in New

[1] Manuscript History. [2] *Ibid.*

Norfolk Street were all examined fruitlessly, while his bankers and his solicitors could throw no light upon the subject."

Months passed thus without its being possible to ascertain who was the owner of the estate. At last two of Sir Beaumont's sons resolved to make a final search in New Norfolk Street. They wandered again through the silent house where every room seemed eloquent of the untimely fate of their unfortunate cousin; they spent many hours examining again every place which had previously been searched, and every drawer or chest where it seemed even remotely possible that the missing document might have been deposited for hiding or for safety. But all in vain; and at length in despair they gave up the attempt, convinced that if the will had once existed, it must have been destroyed.

But at the very moment when they were leaving the house a strange thing happened. Passing through the drawing-room, one of them observed a small Pembroke table which stood conspicuously in the centre of the room, but the drawer of which was not even locked. As he went by he pulled this open, and there to his astonishment lay the long-lost will! It had seemed so improbable that such a receptacle would contain anything of value or of a private nature that, during all the months when a fruitless search had been conducted throughout the house, no one had dreamed of examining so unlikely a place. The will was found sealed up, as it had been sent from the solicitor, the one envelope containing three copies; and everything was now explained. Sir Charles, receiving the document on the eve of his departure for the Continent, had tossed it into the nearest drawer, intending the next morning to deposit it in safety. The subsequent excitement of his journey had driven the matter from his recollection, and, followed so soon by his fatal illness, had resulted in his intentions never being carried out.

In conclusion, however, the will thus strangely lost and recovered on examination proved to be satisfactory to all. Sir Charles had left his personal property to his mother and sister; while the estate was bequeathed to his uncle and successor. It was none the less generally recognised that, considering the great influence which Lady Gertrude had possessed over her son and his known affection for her, she

could easily, had she so wished, have persuaded him to make a will wholly in her favour, and her relations therefore did full credit to the sense of honour which had obviously made her act against her own interests in this matter, and caused her to emulate the disinterested behaviour of "the Lady Beaumont Hotham" nearly a century before.

CHAPTER XII

THE COMMISSIONER

SIR BEAUMONT HOTHAM, who became the seventh baronet on the premature death of his nephew, has already figured in these pages. The "Brother Hotham" of Lady Gertrude's playful sallies; the kindly uncle of little Sir Charles's early affections; above all, the father of those five manly boys, merry visitors at Campden House—slight as has been the mention of him, he is already familiar to the reader as a personality unusually distinct and attractive. But, in order to glance at the romantic story of his early life, it is necessary to turn back to what now seems a remote period in the present history.

Born in 1698, the second son of Sir Charles, the fourth baronet—who, it will be remembered, was remarkable for his handsome person and physical strength—the first glimpse which we get of Beaumont Hotham was when, as a boy, he saw Sir Charles Strickland throw into the fire the family document so prized by his father. Watching that event fearfully, young Beaumont had expected the delinquent to share the fate of the treasure thus destroyed; and his father's behaviour that day probably furnished an object lesson to which was due much of the courtesy and forbearance for which that little onlooker was to become conspicuous in after life.

According to the fashion of the day, while his elder brother, the heir to the estate, entered the Army, Beaumont was designed for the mercantile profession. It has previously been remarked that after the sojourn of "the Revolution Sir John" in Holland the Hothams had many friends in that country, and possibly this consideration may have influenced

Sir Charles in determining the destination of his second son. Thus in Amsterdam, the city where, in 1691, the ill-fated heir of Sir John had breathed his last, this other young Hotham, twenty-five years later, commenced his new career. He was placed with the firm of Chitty, then the greatest mercantile house in Holland, as it was one of the foremost in all Europe ; and while being taught the groundwork of his profession, he lodged with the Dutch family of his employer. So quickly did he adapt himself to his new work, so steady was his conduct, and such talent did he display, that the merchant soon felt the greatest regard for him. The youth, moreover, inherited the good looks of his father, so that, besides his exemplary behaviour and obvious business capacity, his handsome appearance and attractive personality quickly endeared him to the heart of the wealthy merchant, and also to that of the merchant's pretty daughter and heiress, with whom he was daily brought in contact.

Thus it happened that, as the time of his apprenticeship drew to a close, the kindly Dutchman, being one day alone with him, addressed him as follows :—

" My friend, your time will soon be finished. Your assiduity has rendered you the master of my business. I love you as my son ; and having no one but my daughter to succeed me, you have my full permission to pay your addresses to her, believing as I do that you will prove an acceptable suitor. I should rejoice in such a union, and should immediately take you into partnership."

This was a proposition calculated to turn the head of a comparatively impecunious youth. Beaumont, with a younger son's portion, forced to work his way in life, and with only the prospect of achieving a moderate competence after years of toil, suddenly found himself offered immediate wealth beyond the dreams of avarice, together with the love of a pretty woman in whose society he had daily passed many happy hours. Yet an insuperable barrier stood between him and all that was so greatly to his advantage.

" Sir," he is said to have replied, " it is impossible for me to do justice to my feelings, or to express my gratitude for so unparalleled an act of generosity. I love you, I value, esteem and admire your daughter, and such a marriage as you

nobly offer would raise me in a pecuniary point of view to a situation far above my most sanguine expectations. But, sir, my heart is not my own. I formed a strong attachment in my boyish days to a cousin whom I left in England, which time has rather strengthened than diminished."

The merchant looked at him with much astonishment, surprised at his relinquishing so splendid a prospect. After a little pause he took his hand and said—" Hotham, your noble conduct raises you still higher in my esteem. None but yourself would have declined so great an offer. You may not be my son ; but you must be my partner."[1]

So the matter was settled thus happily. The pretty daughter, if she harboured in secret a tender feeling for the handsome Englishman, hid her chagrin as best she might ; and Beaumont became in all else the adopted son of the wealthy merchant. He immediately put his own modest fortune into the firm of which he was now partner, it rapidly multiplied, and riches came pouring in. He had now attained the height of his ambition ; at one bound he had reached the head of his profession, and he looked forward to returning to England shortly with a considerable income to share with the beautiful cousin to whom he was attached, Frances Thompson.[2]

But alas ! for his schemes. In 1720 the South Sea Bubble affected trade throughout the world. " Commerce became stagnant ; the richest merchants failed ; and the great Dutch house connected with them, suffering unexpected losses, was at length involved in their ruin." This reverse, in the case of Chitty's firm, was all the more cruel in that it was directly due to the folly of their London agent. Positive injunctions were repeatedly sent to him from Holland that he should trust appearances no longer but should sell out without delay ; yet, ignoring these warnings, he procrastinated day after day till the chance was lost and the crash came. Like Aladdin's palace, the visionary fabric of young Beaumont's

[1] MS. History by the Rev. the Hon. Frederick Hotham, Prebendary of Rochester. The MS. by Arthur Collins gives a slightly different version of the same story, but agrees in the main particulars.

[2] Frances, eldest daughter of the Rev. Stephen Thompson, Vicar of Welton, near Scarborough, in the North Riding.

happiness thus vanished; he returned to his native land bankrupt, his hopes extinguished, even his prospect of present commercial employment gone; while to increase the cruelty of the disaster, his private fortune which he had invested in the firm on being taken into partnership was also entirely lost![1]

But although after years of hard work he came back to England thus poorer than he had set out, one thing still remained to him. He believed that no misfortune could change for him the affection of his beautiful and beloved cousin Frances Thompson; and although he must now begin life over again, and perhaps work many years before their marriage could take place, he felt convinced that she would wait for him meantime, faithfully and uncomplainingly. Therefore, in happy confidence, he travelled in all haste to her father's vicarage in Yorkshire, filled with impatience to see her again after their long separation.

Arrived at his destination, however, what was his surprise to find that although all her family received him with kindness and affection, Frances herself did not come to welcome him, nor did anyone volunteer an explanation of her absence. He ascertained that she was in the house, and he waited, chafing at the delay, but each moment expecting the door to open and her sweet face to appear. At length dinner was announced, and all present repaired to the dining-room without her, while the same mysterious silence was preserved respecting the cause of her absence. By now the misery of young Beaumont was almost past control; yet desperately as he longed to ask the question which trembled on his lips, fear checked him. It seemed to him that the only possible explanation of his cousin's conduct was that her love for him had cooled; that, hearing he was ruined, she was anxious to break off the match, and therefore was determined not to meet him.

The dinner seemed interminable, but at length it ended and the servants left the room. Then the unhappy lover, unable to bear the suspense longer, at last found courage to ask the question on which hung all his future happiness. Where was his cousin? and why was she not present?

[1] Manuscript History.

There was a moment's painful silence, and then her mother explained. Frances had but recently recovered from the small-pox which had severely seamed her face. *Her beauty was totally destroyed.* "And under this cruel alteration," the mother concluded, "she cannot control her grief, or bear that you should see her."

But instead of being overcome by so unexpected a disaster, the relief experienced by young Hotham was intense. Little he cared what transformation had happened to the face of the woman he loved, so long as her heart was unchanged. He flew to the room where the unhappy girl was hiding, and, tenderly embracing her, comforted and soothed her under this heavy trial, assuring her that his affection for her was unalterable. "Did you really think," he said, gently chiding her, "that my love for you was merely skin-deep?"

So happiness was again restored to the lovers, and by and by young Hotham was appointed Commissioner of the Customs in Edinburgh, so that in 1728 his marriage with his cousin at last took place. Although pre-eminently suited to each other in temperament, they must, in personal appearance, have been a strangely ill-assorted couple—the husband so tall and handsome, the wife insignificant and unattractive. "She was of low stature and very plain," relates the manuscript History, "the small-pox having robbed her of her good looks; and very nervous (probably as a result of self-consciousness engendered by the loss of her beauty); but she possessed an amiable disposition and an excellent heart; and she repaid her husband's constancy with the tenderest love for him to the end of their lives."

This happy couple lived first at Innaresk, a village near Edinburgh, and there their four eldest sons came into existence, a fifth being born to them after they had left that locality. The eldest, Charles, was, as we have seen, early sent to London for his education, when he owed much to the kindly care of his aunt Lady Gertrude. During this period, from the far-away north there followed him tender, homely letters full of solicitude and advice from the loving hearts he had left behind, and keeping him punctiliously informed of the simple sayings and doings of that united family:—

Frances Hotham to her son Charles Hotham

Inerask Octbr ye 4th 1739

My dear,

Thank you for yr Letter & take it very well of you that you don't forget You have a Mama that Loves you & very often thinks of you. I wuld write oftener if my Eyes were better.

Lady Gertrude Hotham is so good that she always mentions you in her Letters to yr Papa & it is no small Pleasure to us to hear that you behave well. I hope I need not now put you in mind to be carefull not to do anything to forfitt her good oppinion of you, yr own inclinations I am perswaided will lead you to do as you ought, wch will be ye sure way to make you valued by all yr friends. You dont tell me how you like Dancing. I hope French is become quite easie to you by this time, & that you are able to hold a Conversation at Kensington[1] where I desire you will make my Compliments. Yr Little Brothers are all well, & very often talk of you. Jacky's[2] ambition is to be as good a Scholar as Brother Charles, he begins to read very prettily, & as soon as he can write, it will be to you.

adue, Dear Child & believe me yr
Affect Mother
Fra: Hotham.

And after the Christmas holidays, during that separation, came another anxious letter of tender advice from the distant mother to her little son of ten years old:—

Edinburgh Jan ye 15th 1740.

You see I take ye first opportunity to thank you for your letter, & am very glad to find you are in good health & spirits. The Studies you are engaged in will not, I hope, go ye worse on for ye round of divertions you have lately gone through, but that you will apply yr Self to yr learning wth ye same chearfullness that you have done to yr pleasures, wch will be a means to make all your acquaintance think well of you.

I am very sorry you had not new linen against ye hollidays, as I can't well fitt you with Shirts at this distance, & fearing it might be allso too long to wait for them, was I to send 'em from hence, must beg ye Favour of Lady Gertrude Hotham to give orders for a Dozen to be made for you.

[1] Campden House.

[2] John, afterwards Bishop of Clogher.

Pray don't fail to make my compliments to my Lady, & ye whole family when next you wait on them, wth repeated thanks for all her favours. Your Brothers are very well & often talk of you. The two eldest are to have Breeches this Summer, wch is no small joy to them.

I am just going out so have only time to tell you, I am, my dear,

Your affect Mother
FRANCES HOTHAM.

On June 10th came news from Beaumont Hotham to the exile in London that that epoch-making event in the family annals had at last taken place at Innaresk :—

I received your letters which I shall take care of. Those for your Brothers they thank you for & are much pleas'd with them. Jackey particularly desires me to say for him that as soon as he can write he will himself assure you of his acknowledgments. *He & his Brother Billy were last week put into breeches!* They both of them speak French very prettily.

Reading these simple, loving letters with a knowledge of all which the after-years were to bring, one finds an irresistible fascination in the spectacle of Jacky, the future Bishop, and Billy the future Admiral, Commander of the British Fleet, as two little prattling babes of five and four, lisping French prettily with halting tongues, and vastly important in their tiny breeches—the first marked step towards a far, far distant manhood. The world is eternally full of such scenes—recurrent in each generation as the love which records them—but when imagination can span the flight of years and contrast the babe of to-day with the man of to-morrow, the comparison never lacks in charm.

To Beaumont Hotham, however, no fact equalled in importance that of the early knowledge of French displayed by his little sons. So vital in those days was a mastery of that language to a man's career that none might hope to hold a civil appointment or a position at Court who was not thus proficient. In his anxiety, therefore, that his eldest boy should excel in this branch of education, we find the Commissioner writing letters in the Gallic tongue to the small scholar at Marylebone School, while Charles, on his part, struggled

laboriously to respond in similar fashion. But ere long this correspondence ceased, for Beaumont unexpectedly left his northern home to take up his abode near the little lad from whom he had been unwillingly separated.

An unpopular measure had been adopted in Edinburgh. It had been decided that the salaries given there to Commissioners of the Customs were to be reduced from £1000 per annum to £500 ; but, thereupon, Beaumont was offered promotion to the Board of Customs in London, and, removing his family thither in October, 1742, soon found the advantage of his new position. He had now greater scope for his abilities, and his early mercantile education stood him in good stead. "Mr. Hotham," the manuscript History explains, "had now entered a field more suited to displaying his talents, and was much consulted by the Ministry on subjects of finance and trade, of which he had a perfect knowledge united with an uncommon skill in calculation." He also subsequently embarked upon a political career, being persuaded to represent Beverley in Parliament ; yet he went but little to Yorkshire, preferring to reside during the summer months in the pretty country near London, and moving thence during the Parliamentary session to a house which he purchased in Duke Street, Westminster, in 1745.

This new home, situated near the Secretary's office of the Board of Customs and also convenient for his Parliamentary duties, had the further advantage of being adjacent to Westminster School where his sons were educated. It had, however, one drawback in that it was also near the famous Tuttle Fields, part of a marshy tract of land which lay between Millbank and Westminster Abbey and stretched away to the then lonely road which led to the little village of Chelsea. The name of this dreary waste, among various other explanations, was said to be derived from Tot-hill (the Hill of Outlook), a mound adjacent to it being dignified by this appellation ; but although amongst the ponds and ditches of the open ground there uprose a few stray houses of no mean dimensions, the locality long continued to bear an evil reputation for disorderly gatherings which took place there, and for the reported presence of highwaymen who were said to frequent it during the dark winter evenings. Shortly after Beaumont had taken

possession of his new home, a story in this connection roused considerable interest on account of the circumstances attending it.

In July, 1745, all England was stirred by the intelligence that the young Pretender had arrived to claim his heritage by force of arms. Various were the sentiments aroused by this news, and, openly or secretly, each man was enthusiastically ranged for or against the cause of the adventurous Prince. Meetings were held and riots ensued in many parts of London, and the disturbed state of the town gave cause for anxiety.

One evening during that eventful summer, it is related, a gentleman, who was secretly an officer in the Pretender's army and had been attending a meeting in London on behalf of that Prince, subsequently hired a chaise in order to drive with a companion to the remote village of Chelsea. The ferment throughout the town was such that, fearful of being stopped and questioned, the travellers determined to avoid the streets, and to cross instead the lonely waste of Tuttle Fields. They had not gone far, however, before they repented their rashness. In the dusk, two men, cloaked and masked, suddenly rode up to the chaise, and scanning its occupants aggressively, stopped the post-boy and entered into conversation with him. The profession and intentions of the unwelcome strangers were sufficiently obvious, and the unhappy travellers had resigned themselves to be robbed in the hope of saving their lives, when what was their surprise to observe that, upon the post-boy whispering something to one of the highwaymen, the latter made a sign to his comrade and both intruders wheeled about and cantered off as abruptly as they had appeared. Thankful at such an unexpected escape the travellers proceeded on their way ; but, arrived safely at their destination, they questioned the post-boy respecting the two suspicious-looking individuals who had spoken to him. At first he maintained an obstinate silence, but finally, when pressed, he replied briefly—" It's not much matter *who* they were, but they belong to those who do not care to meddle with Prince Charlie's boys ! " How the post-boy had discovered the political opinions of the men he drove the latter never discovered, but deeming it more prudent to treat the matter as a joke, they paid the boy handsomely,

and, as soon as practicable, fled from the village of Chelsea. It may be added that the officer who thus escaped afterwards fought at Culloden.

The story of this adventure, however, became known, and the idea that a political bias might animate the doubtful frequenters of the lonely waste to many added a fresh terror to that dubious locality. But of the doings of the '45 only an after-echo is found in the correspondence of Beaumont Hotham who, under the date *Tuesday 3d March* 1756–7, remarks briefly :—

My Lord Lovat's trial comes on next Thursday, I believe I shall attend one day to see the form, and how my old acquaintance acquits himself.[1]

Yet one thing the events of that stirring time must have brought home to him—that the open land adjacent to his new house was not to be recklessly visited after dark, any more than the lonely district beyond it known as Five Fields which led to the miry parish of Knightsbridge, or the still more solitary and rough ride to the village of Kensington where resided his sister-in-law Lady Gertrude. Nevertheless, often after his arrival in London did the Commissioner on a sturdy nag traverse this latter route, so pleasant by day, so dangerous in the gathering dusk ; while, on occasions, he was tempted further afield, and journeyed to Twickenham to visit his old friend Lady Suffolk at Marble Hill.

That lady, now happily established in her own home, was, as formerly, the centre of a small Court of devoted attendants. In the snow-white house on the banks of the river, towards the erection of which George II had contributed £12,000, Beaumont Hotham must have felt a peculiar interest, for it had been designed by his great friend Lord Pembroke[2] who, assisted by another famous amateur architect, Lord Burlington, had personally superintended its construction. The intention of Lord Pembroke, we are told, " has been to make

[1] Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, who at the age of eighty entered into the Rebellion upon a promise from Prince Charlie that he would make him Duke of Fraser. He was taken, tried and executed.

[2] Henry, 9th Earl of Pembroke and 6th of Montgomery, a lieutenant in the Army ; married, in 1733, Mary, eldest daughter of Richard, Viscount Fitzwilliam. He died January 9th, 1750.

the rooms on the first floor of imposing proportions, and to effect this the height of the lower and upper storeys has been somewhat sacrificed. The staircase is entirely made of finely carved mahogany, and some of the floors are of the same wood. It is said that the unceremonious way in which one of the King's naval officers felled the trees for this purpose in the Bay of Honduras without permission of the Court of Spain, nearly caused a war."[1] Lady Suffolk, the most peaceable of mortals, seemed destined always to create dissension; none the less she was extremely satisfied with her new possession, and spent so many years building and improving it and its surroundings, that she thereby greatly crippled her resources, while Dean Swift wrote cynically :—

My house was only built for show;
My lady's pocket empty now;
And now she will not have a shilling
To raise the stairs or build the ceiling;
'Tis come to what I always thought,
My Dame is hardly worth a grot!

Yet despite straitened means, advancing years, and increasing deafness, the popularity of Lady Suffolk did not diminish, and her society was sought by all the noted men of her generation. Dean Swift constituted himself her cellarer, Pope became her landscape gardener, till their deaths Gay and Arbuthnot had aided her in the superintendence of her household; lastly, Horace Walpole was her constant guest, while with mock humility he sang of the lure exercised by that charmed circle :—

Where Suffolk sought the peaceful scene
Resigning Richmond to the Queen,
And all the glory, all the teasing
Of pleasing one not worth the pleasing;
Where Fanny[2] "ever blooming fair"
Ejaculates the graceful pray'r
And, 'scaped from sense, with nonsense smit
For Whitfield's cant leaves Stanhope's wit.
Amid the choir of sounding names
Of Statesmen, bards, and beauteous dames,
Shall the last trifler of the throng
Enroll his own such names among!

[1] *Memorials of Twickenham*, by R. S. Cobbett, M.A., page 241.
[2] Lady Fanny Shirley (see *ante*, page 246.)

Moreover, although the demise of her husband George Berkeley, in 1745, and the loss of her only son had left Lady Suffolk lonely, she had taken upon herself fresh duties and kept her heart young with new interests. Her nephew and niece, John Hobart and his only sister, the children of her brother Lord Buckinghamshire, now lived with her, and under her mild guardianship knew but little restraint. Thus it came about that, while Beaumont Hotham at this period cannot have dreamed that the imperious little maiden, Lady Dorothy Hobart, was destined one day to be his daughter-in-law, he often arrived at Marble Hill accompanied by the youthful members of his family, who came as eagerly to enjoy the society of these young companions as did the Commissioner that of their elders.

In truth, to that gay and hospitable house, where young and old so readily forgathered, all came joyously and left with regret. An assemblage of all the talents, wit and satire flourished there, badinage became a fine art, laughter crystallised into verse, and every jest served for the outpourings of genius—jests which sometimes had for their butt the gentle hostess. On one occasion Pope, who sang of her as Chloe, made her the subject of a merry gibe. At dinner Lady Suffolk, who had learnt that her friend Mrs. Blount was ill, turned to her footman and bade him remind her that she must send on the morrow to inquire how the invalid had passed the night. Pope, whose admiration for Patty Blount was well known, did not forget the incident, and later in his *Moral Essays* appeared the couplet :—

> Would Chloe know if you're alive or dead ?
> She bids her footman put it in her head !

A more unkind anecdote is recorded by Horace Walpole, although it has been hinted that, in his desire to be entertaining, he therein sacrificed fact to fiction. The hostess of Marble Hill, in the vain hope of curing the deafness which was a life-long trial to her, consulted the famous surgeon Cheselden without success. Subsequently Cheselden came to her with the intelligence that a man under sentence of death in Newgate was similarly afflicted, and he proposed that she should procure the pardon of the criminal on condition of his under-

going an experimental operation from the result of which she might afterwards benefit. The bargain was made. Lady Suffolk by means of her influence succeeded in securing the remission of the man's sentence; but the operation, the ostensible reason for his pardon, never took place. *The criminal, whose life was saved by this ruse, proved to be Cheselden's own cousin,* who thus escaped the gallows, while the dupe of the wily surgeon, Lady Suffolk, never received the expected benefit, and remained as deaf as ever!

But although Pope did not scruple to make merry at her expense, although Dean Swift, inditing to her both prose and verse, could mingle venom with his eulogies, although Horace Walpole could subordinate his friendship to his love of scandal or his desire to amuse, yet the fact remained that few were so beloved and admired by a censorious generation as was the gentle hostess of Marble Hill; while, despite the rumour of her former relations with George II, she was regarded by her contemporaries as the very quintessence of propriety and of circumspect behaviour.

> Yet Chloe sure was formed without a spot!

exclaimed Pope; and the very infirmity under which she smarted was made the channel for a graceful compliment:—

> Has she no faults then, Envy says, Sir?
> Yes, she has one, I must aver;
> When all the world conspires to praise her,
> The woman's deaf and will not hear!

A curious contrast Beaumont must have found between the brilliant assemblies at Marble Hill and the not less remarkable, but more sober, gatherings at Campden House. Small wonder that Mrs. Anne Pitt, that outspoken cosmopolitan, had felt there might be hope for Lady Gertrude when that saintly lady succumbed to the leaven of Lady Suffolk's worldly conversation! Yet Beaumont, fully as he appreciated the attraction of these rival hostesses, found a yet greater delight in the society of Lady Gertrude's witty brother Chesterfield, whose town house lay but a pleasant walk from his own across the intervening park. True, in 1745, when Beaumont first settled in Duke Street, Chesterfield was absent in Ireland, where he had been sent as Lord Lieutenant; and after his return he

often resided at his villa at Blackheath; nevertheless the Commissioner and his friend were so inseparable that it became a jest with the sons of the former; "*Monsieur*"—so they called him—"*toujours chez mi Lord Chesterfield!*" their letters facetiously announce; and dissimilar as were the characters of those two elderly companions, their appreciation of each other's company never palled.

But although, after the Commissioner's removal to London, the circle of his acquaintance, both social and political, was ever widening, his life remained absorbed in the existence of his sons, and his story is too closely interwoven with theirs to be disassociated in the telling, save in a few main incidents which may here be related.

In 1747 his eldest son Charles, whose career we shall follow later, joined his regiment abroad and subsequently accompanied Lord Albemarle[1] to Paris as aide-de-camp in 1748, when the latter was made Ambassador-Extraordinary. During the absence of the young soldier, Beaumont kept him well plied with the news of current events, occasionally writing from his country house, to which he usually repaired about May 1st, and of which his friend Mr. Wood, of the Customs House, sends mention to young Hotham, remarking how he had called on the Commissioner and his wife "in their retirement at Fulham: 'tis a sweet pretty place for the summer months." In 1749, however, Beaumont wrote on September 21st:—

Next week we quit Fulham altogether, having hired another place near Bromley in Kent, which tho' farther from town, is more convenient to go to the office, & being in a healthy pleasant country, will I hope suit us for a Summer habitation, especially if against the Spring I can meet with a horse that is easie, safe & has temper, & any other good qualifications into the bargain, which not one in an hundred has, for a man who rides as seldom as I do. The post-chaises you deal in abroad I believe would not do for our roads, otherwise as I remember they are safer & easier.

Direct your letters to Duke St being near the Secretary's office.

That same year Beaumont wrote from London, sharing the

[1] See *ante*, page 259.

general excitement occasioned by the appearance of the new French Ambassador, Monsieur de Mirepoix and his notable wife,[1] who had established themselves in Lord Albemarle's house in London, while the latter took possession of the Maréchal's house in Paris—a bad exchange, so Beaumont indicates, since my lord's house was nobly furnished and that of Monsieur le Maréchal was stripped bare:—

Beaumont Hotham to his son Charles Hotham

The Fr. Ambassador & his Retinue we keep gaping & staring at Here, as if we had never beheld a Frenchman or laced clothes before, and yet by what I hear, his Suite in general, & what belongs to them, is rather awkward & gaudy, than lively & in taste.

We are told here that he expresses some confusion at finding my Lord's house so compleatly furnished & nothing taken out of it, when his is half naked & stript; but that I take to be what we call here a *Copy of his Countenance* because if ye best of his furniture is really taken down, he might very soon sett that right by immediately ordering it to be put up again, but I doubt, or rather believe, you are in a country where words and Deeds don't always tally.

We continue to be choak'd here with heat & dust. . . . The Duke of Bolton[2] we slew for some days, but we have since brought him to life again. In ye former event He was not lamented as a national loss, nor in ye latter do I hear of any publick rejoycings. All your friends here and at Kensington are much yours.

For long the doings of the Ambassador, the gaudiness of his equipage, the fashionable red heels which he wore, and endless gossip respecting his behaviour, furnished food for talk to the interested Londoners. "I cannot comprehend how they (the French) come by the reputation of a lively people," grumbled Horace Walpole. "Charles Townshend has more sal volatile in him than the whole nation. Their King is

[1] See *ante*, page 259.

[2] Charles Powlett, 3rd Duke of Bolton. He never lived with his first wife; and his second wife was Miss Lavinia Fenton, otherwise Mrs. Beswick the actress, who became celebrated in the character of Polly Peachem in the *Beggar's Opera*. By her the Duke had three sons born before marriage. He died "not lamented as a national loss" in 1754.

taciturn and M. de Mirepoix is a walking mummy!" But what her husband lacked in vivacity, Madame de Mirepoix amply supplied. Madame du Deffand thus describes her:— "Sa figure est charmante, son teint est éblouissant, ses traits, sans êtres parfaits, sont si bien assortis, que personne n'à l'air plus jeune, et n'est plus joli!" Beaumont Hotham, however, speaks of her as being very small, and having "a strong leven of English!" but Madame l'ambassadrice was sufficiently versatile to adapt herself readily to any circumstances wherein she was temporarily placed, as instanced later by the fact that, although a Princess of Lorraine and a great lady at the French Court, she voluntarily drove backwards in the Queen's coach beside Madame de Pompadour, and was the first lady of rank to countenance and associate with Madame du Barri:—

Beaumont Hotham to his son Charles Hotham

Fulham 24th August 1749.

Mad^{e}. de Mirepoix I mett with t'other day at Lady Chesterfield's, the Marquis had been there in the Morning & greatly charm'd with the views from Greenwich Park. At present they are in my neighbourhood. I wish your Lord could be as agreeably situated near Paris as they are near London, & that he makes as much use of the country as Mons^{r} de Mirepoix does, for he is ever on horseback without regard to weather, which has been excessive hot & dry this Summer.

Indeed, the energy of Monsieur de Mirepoix continued to surprise those among whom his lot was temporarily cast. Walpole recounts how later, when the Ambassador had moved to Turnham Green, he met him one evening at seven o'clock, on one of the hottest and dustiest days of summer, "walking slowly in the *beau milieu* of Brentford town without any company, but *with a brown lapdog with long ears, two pointers, two pages, three footmen and a vis-à-vis following him.*" But another aspect of the behaviour of the French Envoy and his wife aroused even greater interest:—

Beaumont Hotham to Charles Hotham

London November 16th 1749.

The splendour of my Lord (Albemarle's) entertainment & the finery of his Guests on the King's birthday we hear of,

as I suppose you did of Monsieur de Mirepoix dancing with Miss Chudleigh[1] & his Lady's finery, etc. as also of the latter's being in high Dudgeon upon ye Dss of B—d's taking place of her at Ld Sandwich's. Here opinions are a little divided about it, but with you I take it for granted *tout le monde est d'accord.* Luckily it is an event that has not broke my rest, nor shall I decide hastily upon it, at least not till I have seen Sr Clement Cotterell.[2]

I have made your Compliments to Lord Pembroke as you desire.

This fracas to which the Commissioner refers with quiet sarcasm, and which caused much commotion in the fashionable world both of Paris and London, occurred at a ball given by Lord Sandwich. Considerable discussion had taken place beforehand respecting who would be entitled to take precedence on this occasion, the Ambassadress, Madame de Mirepoix, or the Duchess of Bedford.[3] The fact that both ladies were not only rival queens of society, but rivals also in the devoted attention of my Lord Sandwich, made the matter a more delicate one; and the host was not a little uneasy at the predicted dilemma. Determined, however, that the onus of the decision should not rest upon his shoulders, he cunningly stationed himself outside the ball-room door as the supper hour approached, in order that he might, obviously without any pre-arrangement on his part, offer to hand down to supper whichever lady should first issue forth. When the crucial moment arrived, however, the rivals approached the door together, whereupon the Duchess perforce made a faint show of offering precedence to the Ambassadress, and the Ambassadress, equally of necessity, returned the compliment. At that the Duchess, having herself previously done all that courtesy rendered imperative, swiftly seized her opportunity, accepted the reluctant offer of her rival, and sailed away triumphantly

[1] Countess of Bristol and Duchess of Kingston. See Vol. II, page 30.

[2] The Cotterells were hereditary Masters of the Ceremonies from the reign of Charles I.

[3] Gertrude, eldest daughter of John, 1st Earl of Gower, married in 1737, as his second wife, John, 4th Duke of Bedford. Her son, the Marquis of Tavistock, afterwards married Lady Elizabeth Keppel, daughter of William Anne, 2nd Earl of Albemarle, and was killed in an accident in the hunting field.

down the wide staircase, first of all the brilliant train to descend. But Madame de Mirepoix was not to be worsted. In a flash she recognised that, as she could not go first, she must not go second. With outwardly unruffled composure she signed to everyone present to precede her, and when the whole of the company had departed—even the Duke of Bedford who, in the absence of the host, should have handed her down to supper—then, and then only, did she walk downstairs in regal solitude, indicative of the assumption that, in a procession, the person of greatest importance goes last and alone !

The Duchess of Bedford was outwitted ; but subsequently the Duchess of Norfolk endeavoured to decide the knotty point of etiquette thus raised, by a trial among experts ; opinions, however, remained divided, and at last the matter was allowed to drop. Meanwhile, to hide their chagrin, the two ladies who had caused the commotion continued to visit, meeting each other politely, even affectionately : " but," we are told, " the wound was incurable ! "

Another event which more directly concerned the Commissioner, is referred to in his next letter. As before mentioned, he had a great friendship for Lord Pembroke, who had aided Lady Suffolk in designing Marble Hill. Called by his contemporaries the Architect Earl, Lord Pembroke had inherited his father's taste as a virtuoso—but with a difference. The former Earl delighted in *objets d'art* and statuary ; indeed, it is related how one day he took it into his grave head to improve upon the appearance of his beloved gods and goddesses, and therefore with a piece of charcoal he added eyeballs to the white marble assembly, then summoned his wife and daughters to see how much livelier the inanimate company had become ! But while his son inherited no such passion for realism he was an adept at his own particular hobby, the art of building, and so great became his proficiency that his contemporaries spoke of him as a second Inigo Jones. The greatest benefit which he bestowed upon posterity, however, was in the impetus which he gave to the construction of bridges in England, especially in promoting the erection of the first Westminster Bridge. For this an Act of Parliament was obtained by him in 1736, and he laid the first stone of the

original structure in 1739. The last stone was laid in 1749–50 ; but throughout this undertaking he encountered serious difficulties in carrying out his scheme—and in the very moment of its completion a cruel disappointment appears to have cost him his life :—

Thursday 11 Jany $\frac{1749}{50}$

The vacancy by Lord Crawford's Death[1] is not yet fill'd up, but whatever may become of that, it's look'd upon as a certainty that Lord Robert Manners will get thereby a Regiment. Capt Poyntz, the Equerry, I hear is also dead ; but what ought to affect the Publick more, is the sudden death of my good Lord Pembroke. I was with him two hours on Monday Morning, when he complained of being more out of order than usual which he confessed to me arose from being extreamly discompos'd at something that had pass'd a few days before with relation to erecting a fish-market at an improper Place near Westminster Bridge. On Tuesday he was abroad, & coming home in the evening was Seiz'd suddenly with the Fit that carri'd him off in a few minutes.[2] As I sincerely esteem'd and lov'd the man, from the many valuable qualities which shone thro' the few infirmities He was subject to, and as I was upon a foot of confidence & freedom with Him, which produc'd me now and then some very agreeable hours, I feel a loss which I know I can't repair, as my leisure & my years don't lead me to seek for new friendships.

A few days before he died, he desir'd me to accept of a trust for his family of abt £20,000 which I agreed to, as I shall always be desirous of shewing any mark of my respect and regard towards them.

Your friend abroad[3] I am in hopes may be his successor about his Majesty's person, as being eldest Lord of the Bedchamber, at least my wishes naturally lead me that way, since

[1] John Lindsay, 20th Earl of Crawford, born 1712, died Sept. 20th, 1749, a Brigadier-General, Colonel of the 4th or Scottish Troop of Horse Grenadier Guards. His death was attributed to his taking an overdose of laudanum, "under impatience at the badness of his circumstances, and at the seventeenth opening of the wound which he got in Hungary, in a battle with the Turks." (*Letters of Horace Walpole*, Vol. II, page 189 (ed. Cunninghame).)

[2] The date has erroneously been given by Burke as January, 1750–51.

[3] Lord Albemarle, who was made Groom of the Stole in 1750, on the death of Lord Pembroke.

it would be some sort of comfort to me under my concern that you found in the new Groom of the Stole the same true friend I had the happiness to possess in the late one.

The story runs that Lord Pembroke, attending the Westminster Bridge Committee, fell into " an outrageous passion " ; nor was he soothed on being told by Lord Chesterfield that, " ever since the pier sunk, he had been *damming* and *sinking*." Charles Stanhope, the brother of Lord Harrington, carried the angry man home in his chariot, and *en route* Lord Pembroke begged the coachman to drive very slowly, explaining that he could not control the outbursts of temper to which he gave way, but afterwards, between shame and the asthma from which he suffered, he " always felt daggers, and should certainly die in one of those fits." A relation came to see him soon afterwards, when he repeated the same remarks, and said that he believed he should be dead by night. This supposition proved only too true ; and he expired in his chair about seven o'clock that same evening, thereby giving rise to a witticism among the watermen of London who announced on the next day that " now the great *pier* (peer) is quite gone ! " —" He was one of those lucky English madmen," pronounced Horace Walpole, " who get people to say, whatever extravagance they commit, ' Oh, it is his way ! ' . . . His great excellence was architecture ; the bridge at Wilton is more beautiful than anything of Lord Burlington or Kent."[1]

Beaumont Hotham to his son Charles Hotham

London Jan 25th 1749–50.

Lord Pembroke's death continues to be generally lamented, I have lost in him a very sincere and usefull friend, & had he liv'd you would probably in time have felt the good effects of it. The person I wish his successor will, I hope, make it up to you since you have already had proofs of his kindness, which I flatter myself you continue your endeavours to deserve.

By Sir Wm Morrice's[2] Death your acquaintance of that

[1] *Letters of Horace Walpole*, Vol. II, pages 188–9.

[2] Sir William Morrice married the youngest daughter of Bishop Atterbury. He was an old Queen's Scholar, and was made High Bailiff of Westminster, an office to which he was appointed through Atterbury's influence but which he was allowed to sell in 1730–31 on condition of contributing £500 towards building the new dormitory for the King's scholars.

name[1] has a further acquisition of above £2,000 a year. He is gone down to Launceston to stand in the late Sir Wm's room, where I hear he will be vigorously oppos'd by Capt Rodney, recommended by the D. of Bedford.

I am glad the Ceremonial is settled as to the Princes of the Blood, & wish it had been sooner, as well as with some other considerable families, for want of which (if what we are told here is true) your friend[2] & consequently his family, have not pass'd their time so agreeably as they otherwise might have done, but perhaps we talk here at random, or, which is as bad, without foundation. Mr Hor. Walpole once made me understand the real state of the several Degrees of *Noblesse* in France, which being by no means similar to ours, & that point very little understood here, I would have you inform yourself whence their titles arise, how far they descend, what privileges respectively attend them, & what upon the whole can furnish you with a clear idea of that matter, or of any other which may deserve your attention, or other people's enquiry.

The Same to the Same.

Bromley July 22 1750.

The fatigue of the Instalment[3] was, I hear, excessive, & quite got the better of Lord Granville, who was forc'd to retire just after supper was serv'd. Your Lord was, I believe, quite satisfied at his only being by Proxy at the Solemnity. I hope he is well & beg my compliments there & where else proper.

Should Madame la Dauphine[4] produce a Son, I can easily conceive the whole country & Paris particularly would shew their joy in all possible Shapes, and was I twenty years younger I don't know whether I should not bestow my month of September in mixing with the Crowd, but at present I fear I should think ye bustle too great for me, & should possibly be so very unfashionable as to wish to see what is fine in the environs of Paris, whilst others were gasping for Breath in the Crowd & heat of ye Diversions within It ; & unless you could promise me the sight of the Spectacle to be exhibited on this occasion

[1] "Mr. Morrice, Clerk of the Green Cloth, heir of Sir William Morrice and of vast wealth." (*Horace Walpole*, Vol. III, page 302.)

[2] William Anne, Earl of Albemarle.

[3] On July 12th, 1750, William Anne, 2nd Earl of Albemarle, was installed by proxy a Knight of the Garter.

[4] A daughter of Augustus III of Saxony, and second wife of the Dauphin Louis, only son of Louis XV, who subsequently pre-deceased his father. His first wife had died in 1746.

with the same facility almost with which I saw our fireworks I question whether I should think *Que le Jeu valoit la Chandelle.*

Mr Adair will I suppose stay to see it out. I envy Him his Spirits, *mais vive la Joye et la Jeunesse.* Capt. Keppel is I hope by this time quite reconciled to your way of living, & does not pine after ye pleasures of the Tower Guard. My best wishes attend 'em both.

I am pleased with the hopes that you give me of being here in October. When you come home remember a capuchin[1] of black silk for your mother.

It is curious to learn from the above letter that at this date young Mr. Adair was staying in Paris, and that, since he was known to Charles Hotham, aide-de-camp to Lord Albemarle, he must presumably already have been acquainted with the family of the Ambassador and consequently with his future wife. A medical student who, by a lucky freak of fate, had achieved a position to which in the ordinary course of events he could never have aspired, Adair quickly became a physician of note, and later Staff Surgeon to George III. At what date he first drifted into love with Lady Caroline Keppel, the daughter of Lord Albemarle, it is impossible to say, but when the attachment was discovered the lady's relations did their utmost to put an end to such an undesirable romance. Lady Caroline, however, remained faithful to her handsome lover, and, it is said, during her enforced separation from him, indited to him the pathetic little love-song "Robin Adair." Eight years after the date of Beaumont's letter, and despite the opposition of her family, she wedded the man to whom she had been unceasingly loyal, and the son of the devoted couple was the famous diplomatist and ambassador Sir Robert Adair.[2] In his next letter Beaumont reverts to the topic which was alike agitating Paris and London:—

If the report we had here to-day is true of the Dauphine's having a son,[3] I am afraid half the people of England will soon

[1] A hooded cloak, like those worn by Franciscan friars, then fashionable for ladies.

[2] This romance is related in full in *A Painter of Dreams*, by A. M. W. Stirling.

[3] The son then born to the Dauphin Louis died in infancy, as did his elder brother; and the third son of the Dauphin, born on August 23rd, 1754, eventually ascended the throne of France as the ill-fated Louis XVI.

visit you & consequently your Lord has nothing for it, to avoid being crowded to Death, but to decamp *au plus vite*, and that I may not charge my conscience with it, I shall probably spend my Sept. in exploring the rides about Bromley. . . .

There is no haste for the Capuchin till you return & if against then you could think of each a small knicknack for Sr Cha: & his sisters I fancy it would be well taken.

So Beaumont remained in England, and spent that summer, and many which followed it, trotting placidly on an "easie nag" about the pretty lanes near Bromley, and welcoming in turn the sons who, already making their way in the great world, came back at intervals to the paternal roof. As the years passed, however, he moved to a country house at Chislehurst, whence he continued to visit his large circle of friends, and to gossip gaily about them to his son Charles:—

Chistlehurst 18 Aug. 1760.

Your friends in Norfolk I presume you hear frequently from: Lady Suffolk's sally thither quite surpris'd me, but by this time I imagine they are all meditating a speedy return within the smoke of London. Lord Chesterfield I din'd wth yesterday. He is much in the old way, & constantly inquires kindly after you. His Brother's Lady[1] has not yet presented him with an heir, as to which point some of ye name I believe *sc consoleront*. Sr Charles and Miss Melly are got well down to Dalton, & as to his health I am told it is rather better since following Dr Lucas's[2] prescriptions.

Soon many of Beaumont's friends followed in his wake, and he had a large acquaintance at Chislehurst. Among others who came to reside there was the Attorney-General, Sir Charles Pratt,[3] who subsequently took his title of Lord Camden from a house purchased by him near the common. Camden the historian had gone to live at Chislehurst in 1690 in order to escape from the plague, and Camden Place, supposed to be built on the site of the house once occupied by him, had passed from the ownership of Mr. Spenser to Mr. Morrice, and

[1] The third wife of Sir William Stanhope. (See page 271.)

[2] Dr. Lucas, an apothecary of great popularity.

[3] Charles Pratt, Earl Camden (1713–94) was called to the Bar in 1738. He was Lord Chancellor from 1766 to 1770; he was President of the Council, 1782–94, and was created Earl Camden in 1786.

thence came into the possession of Sir Charles Pratt who purchased it about 1760. In May that year, young Beaumont, the fourth son of the Commissioner, relates :—

I dined at Chistlehurst on Sunday, where everybody is extremely busy. Lord Robert Bertie[1] has begun his New Road, Mr Pratt is going to build some rooms, and Mr Cooper wants now to sell his place. You may have it for £5000—he first asked six.

In the following June young John Hotham wrote thus to his brother :—

You may remember a house upon this common that belonged formerly to Mr Spenser. The Attorney General has bought it. You may remember another house in this lane, late belonging to Mr Cowper—Sr Richard Adams, one of the Barons of the Exchequer, has bought it. You may also remember a roundish field that *we* used to look upon with envy & said it ought to belong to this place. It was Mr Spenser's, afterwards Mr Morris's [*sic*], & lay upon the left hand of our temple between that & the little wood in the bottom, in short, it joined the farthest corner of our great field. *Beaumont Hotham Esqre, Commissioner of his Majesty's Honble Board of Customs* at London has as good as bought that of the Attorney Gen[l], as also another Field adjoining to it, but quite out of sight of this house, and I do assure you that now it causes much joy in this family because the Attorney-Gen[l] made him the handsomest offer of it in the world, and because nothing in nature prevented him having it. I do assure you I was three whole days saying everything I could think of to make him take it, & was within an ace of not succeeding at last, fidgetty & shilly shally *comme à l'ordinaire.*

This information, with its not very respectful reference to his father, is substantiated in a letter on June 10th by young Beaumont who, in common with his brothers, invariably referred to his parents as Monsieur and Madame :—

[1] Lord Robert Bertie, the third son of Robert, 1st Duke of Ancaster, by his second wife. He became a General in the Army, and Colonel of the 2nd Regiment of Guards, Lord of the Bedchamber, and Member of Parliament. He died in 1748.

If you ever think of Chistlehurst, relative to it I can tell you that the Attorney General is making a sweet pretty place of Mr Morris's ; that Monsieur has bought two fields of him that lie close upon the great field above Coates Wood ; joining to the four uppe· ones Mr Farrington snapt up. That Judge Adams has bought Mr Cooper's for £2,650.

So Mr. Cooper, whose beautiful house had long been the envy of less wealthy dwellers in Chislehurst, was forced to accept for it less than half the sum which he had originally demanded. Meanwhile the rustic inhabitants of the pretty village viewed with scant satisfaction the many transformations which were being effected by the interlopers from a more fashionable world who had invaded their quiet retreat. The alterations attempted by Sir Charles Pratt especially met with strong disfavour. It so happened that, in the course of extending his new possessions, the Attorney-General had ventured to enclose some of the common which the poorer residents from time immemorial had regarded as public property, and the indignation roused by such a breach of their privileges was so great that they deputed an eloquent patriarch to represent to the aggressor their views upon his conduct. Thus it happened that one morning when the Attorney-General was taking an early walk, he encountered in his path an old man, and the following conversation is said to have taken place :—

" Well, John, any news this morning ? "

" No, me Lord [*sic*], I can't say there be. But folks *do* talk about the Common."

" Oh, *talk*, do they ? What do they say ? "

" Well, me Lord, they say this kiud of thing : Suppose a man were to steal a goose off the Common, what would you do with him ? "

" Oh—do with him ?—Bring him to me, and I'll soon settle *that !* "

" Yes, me Lord, so they think and so they talk—but then —they go on to say : *Suppose a man stole a bit of the common from the goose*, what would you do with *him ?* "

" Oh—that's quite a different matter—quite different. Good morning, John ! "

Hence, it is supposed, came the old epigram attributed to William Windham :—

> 'Tis bad enough in man or woman
> To steal a goose from off the common ;
> But surely he's without excuse
> Who steals the common from the goose !

Beaumont Hotham, however, does not appear to have incurred the animosity of his poorer neighbours ; and save for tidings of more stirring events from the outer world the summers which he spent at Chislehurst passed peacefully and with little incident. In September, 1761, his son, that younger Beaumont, wrote thence : "Monsieur and Madame are both so much the same as they were when I first knew them, that I don't believe they ever were or ever will be, fatter or leaner, younger or older ! " Yet although the depredations of time might be little apparent to the onlookers, the Commissioner himself, at the age of sixty-five, began to feel the penalty of advancing years, and on this account he decided to resign his post at the Customs House, thus enabling himself to spend a longer portion of each year at his pleasant country villa. But while complaining of the infirmities of age, Beaumont remained upright and hale as of yore, and was still strikingly handsome ; so much so, that he shortly afterwards attracted the attention of a fashionable portrait painter. George Dance[1] was staying at Camden Place one day when Beaumont Hotham chanced to call there and, charmed by the appearance of the good-looking visitor, the painter at once saw in him the subject for an unusually fine portrait. " Struck with the intelligent and manly countenance of the beautiful old man," relates the manuscript History, " Mr. Dance earnestly solicited permission to take his picture without payment. The result was so correct and excellent a likeness that it was eagerly purchased by the family and sent down to Dalton." And to-day, viewing that portrait[2] with its air of quiet humour and of strong determination, its expression at once shrewd and kindly, the firm mouth, the penetrating glance, the massive brows overarching the brilliant eyes—one can fancy

[1] George Dance, one of the original Royal Academicians, 1770–83.

[2] See Frontispiece, Vol. II.

the old man enunciating the conclusion he had arrived at after a happy, well-spent life, when he wrote with serenity to his eldest son :—

I commend you for suiting yourself to Circumstances as they happen ; 'tis the sure way to be easy to one's self as well as to other people ; for I believe no instance can be given of matters being mended by fretting and grumbling ; & whilst a Man has nothing to reproach his own Conduct with, he has every foundation for Comfort.

Indeed, the simplicity and contentment which had been the prevailing feature of Beaumont Hotham's life remained unchanged to the last, and when in 1767, on the death of his delicate nephew, he became head of his family and the owner of a considerable estate, he made no alteration in his previous manner of living. "Being a generous, hospitable man," we are told, "he had always kept open house in Duke Street, regularly bringing from the House of Commons (which usually rose before 4 o'clock in the afternoon) three or four Members to dinner. But it is curious to contrast the plain and unaffected hospitality of those times with the profusion, splendour, and parade of a subsequent day. Fish and soup, a joint of meat and a pudding composed his dinner. Port and sherry only were produced, and, unaccustomed to the brilliancy of lamps, plain tallow candles lighted the table. This was the mode of living which was then considered to become an ancient Baronet, possessor of a fine estate and a Member of the House of Commons."[1]

Nevertheless Beaumont did not consider that by reason of his age he was exempt from the duties which had come to him so late in life. "The vigor of his mind first led him to obtain Acts of Parliament to enclose Hutton Cranswick and Lockington, by which he considerably increased the estate." Next, reviewing his dead nephew's desire to rebuild the house at Dalton, and deciding that the then old-fashioned residence there was inadequate both in size and comfort to the requirements of future representatives of the family, he determined upon undertaking the work which his young predecessor had

[1] Manuscript History.

not lived to commence. "But in so doing he decided that he would be tempted into no imprudent expenditure which might cripple the resources of those who came after. While planning the elevation and dividing the interior strictly in accordance with the wishes of his eldest son and heir, he would yet proceed with due caution; whenever his purse grew low he would stop the workmen and let the work wait till he felt justified in continuing it."[1] On August 17th, 1768, we find him writing to his eldest son :—

I have heard it conjectured there was Allum upon the Estate, & possibly the chief reason for supposing so was because some was discovered not far off.

My late Nephew, who had the means and ye opportunity which few possessors of the estate can again expect, did not avail himself of those advantages, but on ye contrary has left his successor as bare of money as well possible to be from such an estate. . . .

My expenditure will be for enclosing Cranswyke, Paying off about £5000 debt upon the Estate to Lady Gertrude, & some day or other building a middling house at Dalton. How far they either can or will be effected, God only knows, & at any rate must be proceeded in gradually. As to the little patrimony I had out of the Estate, I shall, thank God, restore to it fourfold, & would have done more if I could.

20th Sept, 1769.

I have turn'd in my thoughts what you mention in one of your last relative to a house at Dalton, & tho' I do not wonder you should wish to be better lodg'd, yet considering the condition y^r^ family now stands in, I do not foresee anything can be compleated in some years; a beginning, to be sure, might be made, but considering the demands upon me, w^ch^ must soon be answer'd, and others I find coming, little could be done.

However, to enable one to speak with more precision, as well as foundation, I have put down some queries which if fairly & honestly answer'd will furnish both you & me with a tolerable guess what the rough part of a house will cost, & if that could in a couple of years be brought about, what little I could afford you, and your own savings, must by slow degrees do the inside,

[1] Manuscript History.

for neither you nor I have the least assistance from any purse but our own.

I don't come into your idea about the Pavillons, for many reasons, among others it would swell the expense extremely & create a house much too large for the place and the estate, &, indeed, for use ; and as to having the staircases in them or the corridors, I think it would intersect the main building by long ill-lighted passages, & lessen & disjoin the rooms, and add little, if at all, to the conveniency. . . .

I would not from this have you imagine that I am so wedded to my outlines of a plan but that it may be much mended, my meaning was only to give such an Idea about the first Floor as would be suitable to the place & probably please, & keep within the bounds of moderation, which should questionless be your great object for yourself & for those that come after. . . .

Miss Hotham's[1] match with Mr Agar, I suppose, will take place soon. Lady Gertrude has been very kind to her.

Forthwith, in accordance with the prudent views of Beaumont Hotham, his son proceeded to procure estimates for the projected work from three architects. The pencilled rough draft of his inquiries is still in existence, and shows an ingenious diversity in the reasons announced by him for enlisting the services of each recipient. The italics are not in the originals :—

To Mr John Carr

Sir,

Tho' I have not the pleasure of being personally acquainted with you, *your general character induces me to trouble you with the enclosed queries*, to which I beg the favour of your answers, as they may possibly incline my father to build here the Body of a House according to the outlines of the dimensions therein laid down. The particular plan for the disposition of that Space will be a further consideration. Should your calculation be so much more reasonable than others I may procure, the Estimate may lead him to engage in it all.

When you have weighed the point so sufficiently as to be able to speak to it with precision, I sh[d] be glad of your answer directed to me here, near Beverley.

I am etc.

[1] Gertrude Hotham, the only surviving daughter of Lady Gertrude Hotham and sister of the 6th Baronet, married, in 1769, Mr. Welbore Ellis Agar.

To Mr Atkinson

Sir,

My Friend Mr Langdale having done you that justice in your Engagem^t with him your character seems so well to entitle you to, I am induced to trouble you with the enclosed Queries.

etc. etc.

To Mr Middleton

Sir,

Upon the general report I have heard of your uprightness and Ability, I am induced

etc. etc.

But though Mr. Carr, doubtless flattered at the impression produced by his "general character," Mr. Atkinson gratified by the justice done to his "engagement with Mr. Langdale," and Mr. Middleton elated at the "general report of his uprightness and ability," all furnished estimates as requested, the great work was not destined to proceed far. In 1771 Beaumont laid the foundation of the home for his posterity, and one cannot but admire the energy of a man who, at an advanced age and already infirm, was willing to embark on so arduous a task from which he personally could never expect to derive benefit. "But what Sir Beaumont so nobly and so generously began," relates the manuscript History, "the hand of Providence would not allow him to finish. On August 25th, of that same year, he had been dining as usual with his family, at Chislehurst, and was preparing to join the ladies who had already retired to the drawing-room, when he was stricken with a paralytic stroke, and never spoke again. This deprived him of the use of his whole right side, as well as of his speech, and four days later, at 8 o'clock on the morning of August 29th, he peacefully breathed his last at the age of seventy-three." His body was conveyed to Dalton and buried in the vault there on September 9th, after he had been in possession of the title and estates for the short period of four years. The house which he had planned for his posterity was level with the ground at the date of his burial.

Only for a brief space did his devoted wife survive him. From the moment of his death her own health declined rapidly, and in the November following she expired at her

house in Stratton Street, Piccadilly, almost at the same hour which had witnessed the death of her husband. "She passed away," we are told, "without a struggle, groan or sigh, about seven o'clock in the morning, as she was endeavouring to rise from her bed"; and she was buried at Dalton, aged seventy-one, on November 29th—the date of her burial being exactly three months from the date upon which her husband had expired.

At the death of Sir Beaumont Hotham, each of his five sons had already carved out for himself a distinct career, in which eventually each made his mark. Eight years after the decease of their father, an entry in the manuscript History runs as follows :—

REMARKABLE SITUATION OF THE CHILDREN OF SIR BEAUMONT HOTHAM

December 31st, 1779

1st Son. Sir Charles Hotham, Bart., Lieut. General of his Majesty's Forces; Groom of the Bedchamber to the King; Knight of the most Honble Military Order of the Bath, and in possession of the valuable estates of his Ancestors; aged 50 years.

2d Son. John Hotham; Bishop of Ossory in the Kingdom of Ireland; aged 44 years. (Afterwards Bishop of Clogher in 1782.)

3d Son. William Hotham; Commodore in His Majesty's Navy, with a distinguished Pendant & the Appointments of Rear Admiral of Great Britain; an old Captain on the Naval list & certain of a Flag as soon as the Promotion can reach him. Colonel also of Marines. Aged 43 years. (Rear Admiral of the Red in Autumn 1787.)

4th Son. Sir Beaumont Hotham, Knight; one of the Honble Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer. Aged 42 years. (Afterwards a Lord Comm of the Great Seal in 1783.)

5th Son. George Hotham; Lieutenant Colonel in the Army; and Domestic Governor of the next Heir to the Crown of Great Britain; aged 38 years; afterwards Aide-de-Camp to the King with the rank of Colonel in the Army, and Treasurer & Secretary to the Prince of Wales in 1782.

With the history of these five brothers we are now concerned—though more immediately with that of the four elder, each of whom, in turn, became head of the family. It will be seen that their careers respectively are representative of four professions—the Church, the Army, the Navy and the Bar; and although in contemporary lives it is obvious that separate narratives must at times overlap, and that events

relative to one must often be common to all, yet this adds rather than detracts from the general interest of the stories which follow. For it is well to view history from a varying standpoint, to see how the same occurrences could affect men of different mould and outlook, and to hear, in regard to the same incidents, the evidence of divers witnesses.

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